

BBC

NEW LOOK

November 2012
AED 15

GoodFood

www.bbcgoodfoodme.com

MIDDLE EAST

INDIAN
MADE EASY
Diwali menu

French faves
Insider guide to
dining in Paris

Revealed!
Atul Kochhar's
Dubai plans

Alfresco affair

Barbecue recipes, picnic-friendly foods, steak know-how, and simple sides

WIN!
Luxe UAE
weekend
breaks



Kitchens special
Your ultimate guide
to a fabulously
stylish kitchen!

INSIDE

- * Healthy weeknight suppers
- * Danish cuisine demystified
- * Gift-worthy homemade sweet treats

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Welcome!



I was invited to be on the judging panel at the Hilton F&B Masters competition last month, an annual event in which Hilton kitchen staff from around the Middle East and Africa region are given an opportunity to showcase their talent, and get recognition amongst their peers. I was amazed at the incredibly high standards displayed by the finalist teams – which necessarily included junior staff members

as well – and it was really encouraging to not only see young talent being nurtured in this way, but the quality of food these chefs were capable of putting up. Just goes to show how vibrant, and poised for growth, the local restaurant scene is at the moment.

It is this very restaurant scene that we will be celebrating at our upcoming *BBC Good Food ME* awards, which is now in its second and final round of voting. If you want to get involved, don't waste any time, as voting closes on November 15 – this is your chance to get your favourite restaurants, and foodie brands, the recognition they deserve. Turn to p101 to find all the details, from who the shortlisted nominees are, to how you can book yourself a spot at the gala awards night in January 2013.

We also turned to some of Dubai's finest restaurants for inspiration when it came to devising Diwali recipes. In fact, we pitted two against each other to come up with a traditional versus contemporary Indian festive menu – whichever style you choose to follow, you will find easy, delicious Indian food to impress, in *Light up your dinner table*, p50.

This is, of course, the time of year that everyone in this region heads outdoors. In this issue, we've got all your alfresco dining needs sorted, from Masterchef UK host John Torode's delicious bbq recipes (*John's big cookout*, p42), and travel-friendly foods that are perfect for that weekend camping trip (*Cool-bag foods*, p38), to a lesson in all things beef (*Steak 101*, p82).

See you in the sunshine!

Sudeshna

Editor's picks

► I love the colour of this new Weber bbq, while my husband found it super easy to use – win! p12.



▲ These gorgeous Michael Aram Black Orchid napkin rings are on my lust-list, p78.



◆ I'm not about to forget that degustation meal at Tetsuya's in a hurry, p96.



MARINA FALL 2012 HOME FASHION NOW IN STORES

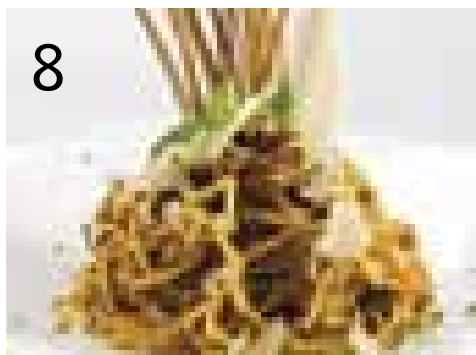
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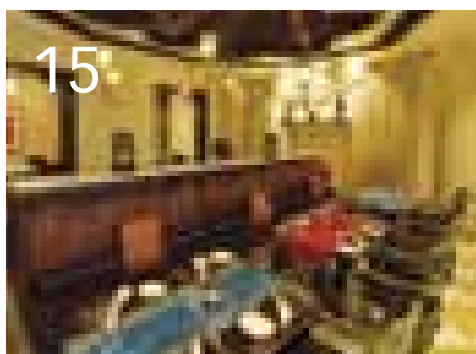
MARINA

EXOTIC HOME INTERIORS

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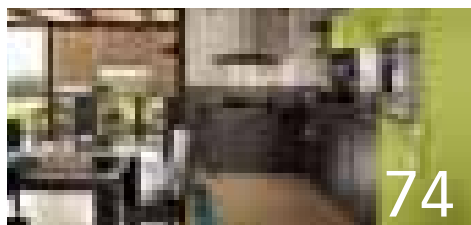
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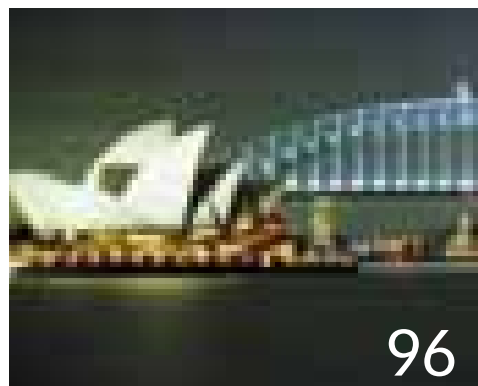
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WIN!

On the cover
Lemon & garlic chicken



42

Our recipe descriptions

V Suitable for vegetarians

F You can freeze it

N Not suitable for freezing

Easy Simple recipes even beginners can make

A little effort These require a bit more skill and confidence – such as making pastry

More of a challenge Recipes aimed at experienced cooks

Low fat 12g or less per portion

Low cal 500 calories or less per main.

Superhealthy Low in saturated fat, 5g or less per portion; low in salt, 1.5g or less; and at least one of the following: provides one-third or more of your daily requirement of fibre, iron, calcium, folic acid and/or vitamin C, or counts at least one portion of your recommended 5-a-day fruit and veg.

Good for you Low in saturated fat, low in salt.

Heart healthy Low in saturated fat, with 5g or less, and low in salt, with 1.5g or less, and high in omega-3 fatty acids

1 of 5-a-day The number of portions of fruit and/or veg contained in a serving

Vit C **Iron** **Omega-3** **Calcium** **Folate** **Fibre**

Indicating recipes that are good sources of useful nutrients

Some recipes contain pork & alcohol. These are clearly marked and are for non-Muslims only. Look for this symbol:

P contains pork

A contains alcohol

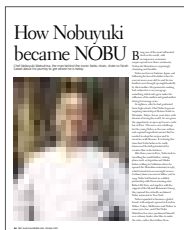
Your say

We love to hear from you!

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

The all new October issue is simply amazing. With exciting recipes and a lot of prizes to be won, I believe it is the ultimate guide to healthy eating and cooking well in the UAE. I have recommended the magazine to all my friends. I think my favourite features are definitely the chef interviews.

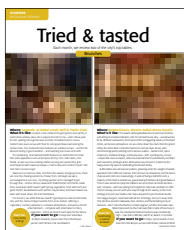
Mohammad Khurram



BRUNCH MANIA

My husband and I moved to Dubai over six years ago and have made lots of new friends. We are constantly checking out various brunches around town, but haven't found one that we can rave about, just yet. I was really glad to see the brunch guide that came with this month's issue as it was filled with delicious recipes to recreate at home, as well as very informative details and a price point for each, which is great as we can choose a few to fit our budget. It is definitely going to sit on my bookshelf for a long time!

Sage D'mello



REFRESHING IDEAS

My friend talked me into buying a hand blender a few months ago, and ever since then I've been experimenting with different smoothie recipes –

TALK TO US!

Email us on feedback@bbcgoodfoodme.com with your thoughts, views and comments.



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Or, you could write to us at:
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BBC Good Food Middle East.
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PO Box 13700, Dubai, UAE.

Star Letter

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

I very rarely go through the magazine that my other half buys, but I happened to open *BBC Good Food ME* just a few days ago as it was lying on the coffee table. I found your article *Is the world running out of food* (October 2012) really interesting because it is something that will happen, but a lot of people choose to ignore it, because they think that it is not a possibility. Here in the Middle East, there appears to be a lot of

food wastage, whether it is at restaurants or at home. I often wonder about what happens to the leftovers at restaurants and whether it gets binned or taken home by employees. To be honest, I hope it is given to charity or families in need, instead of being wasted.

Geoff So



Win!

The writer of the Star Letter wins a fabulous **Dankotuwa dinner set, worth Dhs 1,690w.** One of the world's finest

porcelain brands, it is not only stylish and elegant, but also has very high whiteness, translucency, and resistance to chipping and scratching. It's the ultimate accessory for stylish entertaining.



some really good and some, well, let's just say it's best if I don't get overly creative! Your article *Sunshine Coolers* (September 2012) gave me a lot of good ideas for what to make. I've tried the melon spritzers, luscious lemonade and choconana shake, and so far, I'm loving it! I think I'm going to get through the rest of the ones in your feature by the end of the month. This is the first time I bought *BBC Good Food ME*, and I think this is one magazine my husband wouldn't complain about me adding to our home's clutter.

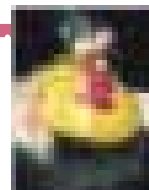
Cindy Law

insightful and informative. I think it went to show the potential of a global food shortage, which is a very realistic possibility. On the whole, I think *BBC Good Food ME* is a great magazine and the new design is filled with tons of informative features and recipes.

James Cruz

READER SNAPSHOT

Rupal Kamat sent us a photo of *The BBC Good Food ME* anniversary goodie bag she took home.



"Thanks, team BBC Good Food ME! The Kitsch goodies were such a great way to celebrate your birthday. Wish you sweet success."

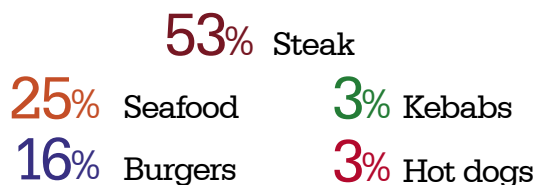
PACKED WITH INFO

I found the food shortage feature (*Is the world running out of food?*, October 2012) to be quite

We asked you...

Facebook poll

What is your favourite food to chuck onto the BBQ?



MAZINA

GENERATION CREATION SATURDAY

FAMILY BRUNCH AT *Mazina*



Try out a new talent this month with the chance to pick up fabulous prizes and impress the whole family at Mazina's fun-filled Saturday Family Brunch. Pair up with mum or dad for a lesson in the art of balloon twisting and learn how to transform different shapes and colours of balloons into all kinds of animals and flowers. Add a delicious buffet menu of international dishes, plenty of entertainment for the kids, and make your weekend a memorable one at The Address Dubai Marina.

Date: 17th November 2012

Time: 12.30pm to 3.30pm

Special price: AED 220 including soft drinks

Children aged between 7-12 years enjoy meals for half the price and under 6 years dine with our compliments

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WHERE *life* HAPPENS

Foodie file

What's hot and happening in the culinary world, here and around the globe.



DINE IN THE CITY

✦ Bringing the fresh fish, spice and love of a good port to the shores of Dubai is the authentic Portuguese restaurant, Portugal at Seaview Hotel, Bur Dubai. The stone-arched, intimate eaterie has a vertical garden, with a traditional Portuguese singer to serenade you whilst you work your way through the delicious menu offering cataplana, codfish salad and traditional barbecued meats and fish. Call 04-3597427.

✦ For those living and working near Jumeirah Lake Towers, check out the new Nais Italian Kitchen restaurant (shown here), where you can try out hand-made gnocchi and pastas. Call 04-4529991.

✦ Planning a weekend shopping spree at Mall of the Emirates? The perfect place to stop for a refuel is the newly opened Taqado restaurant, which serves quick, healthy and delicious Tex-mex including tacos, burritos and salads – all chemical- and MSG-free. Call 04-4099000.

“The tradition of Italian cooking is that of the matriarch. She didn't waste time thinking too much about the celery, but got the best celery she could and dealt with it”

- Mario Batali, American chef and writer

AND THE WINNER IS...

Don't miss the most exciting food event in town! The third annual BBC Good Food ME awards night will take place on January 30, 2013, at The Ritz Carlton DIFC. To mingle with the region's who's who at the gala event celebrating the best in food, book your tickets – on sale now! Visit www.bbcgoodfoodme.com/awards/2012.



Stay for supper?

Enjoy a supper club evening while watching a cooking demonstration by chef Andy Campbell and truffle expert Massimo Vidoni, as they join forces to host the Black and white truffle knights, at the Miele Gallery. You can indulge in plates of saffron tortellini filled with truffled mash, porcini cream, white truffle shavings; and seabass fillet with asparagus, black truffle, shell fish reduction; as well as desserts like vanilla panna cotta with semi frozen berries and truffle gold leaf honey. On November 14, from Dhs150 per person. Call 050-3948361 or 050-9289958 to book your spot.

LONDON CALLING

If you're planning a visit to London this month, don't miss the BBC Good Food Show London, taking place from November 9 to 11, at London Olympia. Shop for seasonal produce, go on a culinary journey through the Restaurant Experience and sip fine wines at The Wine Show. Visit bbcgoodfoodshowlondon.com for details.



This just in:

We can't wait to place a selection of brie, gouda and camembert on this Michael Aram BlackFeather cheeseboard with knife, to add dollops of style at our next cocktail party. Dhs475, at Harvey Nichols Dubai.

Foodie file

What's hot and happening in the culinary world, here and around the globe.



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Here to help

Our expert chef Andy Campbell offers practical advice to tackle all your cooking dilemmas.

Q When I thaw frozen berries, they usually become a mushy mess. Please suggest the best way to thaw them so that they retain their actual size, shape and taste?

A. Place the berries, side by side, in a plastic or stainless steel colander, over a bowl. Keep this in the refrigerator, the bowl will collect the juice and the berries will defrost overnight. Make sure not to stack the berries on top of each other.

Q Whenever I make broth it tends to have a slick of oil on the brim. How do I fix this?

A. There are various methods. You could try skimming the broth with a ladle on a low heat, by making circular motions and just breaking the surface tension continuously. Or instead, allow the broth to cool, then refrigerate, the fat will rise to the surface; take the fat out with a ladle. Alternatively, you can add a few ice cubes (either when the broth is hot or cold) and it will collect the fat – you can discard the ice later.



Q What is the best way to remove bitterness from brussels sprouts?

A. Trim the outer leaves and wash well with warm water. Then, trim the stem and cut out an x shape on it, this will help the sprout cook evenly. Fill a large pan (not aluminium as it will discolour the vegetables and make them go brown), with $\frac{3}{4}$ salted boiling water, cook for about 5-8 mins depending on size, or steam for the same time. Drain the water, and toss in a little butter, mix well, and season with salt and black pepper.



Q Does chopping vegetables such as onions and storing in a refrigerator, for 2-3 days before cooking, take away its nutritional value?

A. Vacuum packing is the easiest way to keep vegetables fresh or else it will create a mould due to oxygen, water and heat. If you do not have this facility, zip lock bags with the air squeezed out, also work well. Generally, it is better to cut the fresh vegetables when needed to maximise nutritional value; always cut with the grain, and not cross wise, to help keep nutrients intact.

Q If I have added too much salt to a dish when cooking, is there a way of fixing it?

A. It can be a bit hard to fix at times so try and be a little more careful by adding seasoning a little at a time, and stirring well before tasting, to allow the seasoning to be absorbed properly. If it is too late and you have over-seasoned, add a little cream or butter to soften the taste. Similarly, rice and potatoes can help tone down the saltiness as well, but make sure not to go overboard.

Q I drink a lot of green and black tea and throw the bags out. I've heard it can be used for cooking. Could you please suggest how?

A. Dry out the tea together with some white rice, and sprinkle a little sugar on top. Then put the green tea mixture in a thick based roasting tray with a wire rack. Place salmon fillets in aluminium foil and place on the rack, to get a smoked salmon. Or simply use the contents from inside the tea bag, and place on the charcoal of a BBQ to give the barbecued meat or chicken a unique tea scent.

Andy's ingredient of the month



I have been using camel milk in almost every dish, and even drinking it all the time. It is known to have ten times more iron and three times more Vitamin C, compared to cow's milk. Try replacing regular milk with camel's milk in desserts such as saffron infused panna cotta, for a healthy twist.

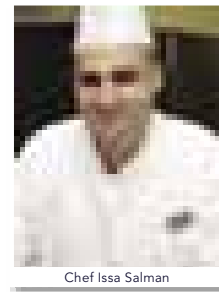
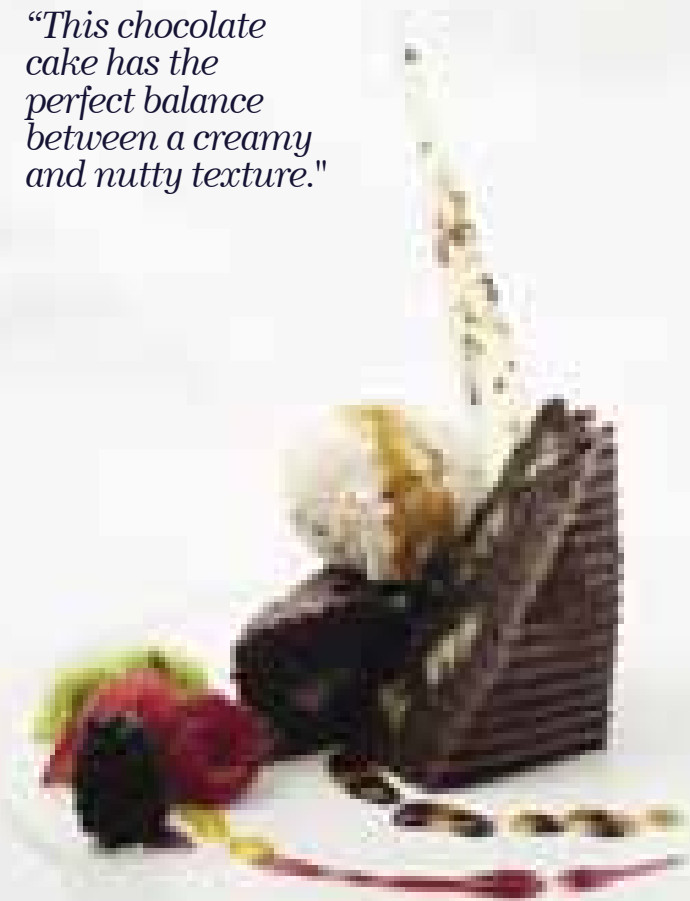
Got a cooking question you need answered? Write in to us at **feedback@bbcgoodfoodme.com**.

To find out more about Chef Andy, visit chefandycampbell.com.

Fudgy treat

Pastry chef Issa Salman from Kempinski Hotel Aqaba shows us how to give a chocolate fudge cake an indulgent, nutty twist, by pairing it with chocolate hazelnut ice cream.

"This chocolate cake has the perfect balance between a creamy and nutty texture."



Chef Issa Salman

Chocolate fudge cake with chocolate hazelnut ice cream

INGREDIENTS

220g flour
220g melted chocolate
220g hazelnuts
500g butter, melted
140g cocoa powder
1kg sugar
500g (10 pcs) eggs
2 tbsp honey
3 tbsp fresh cream

FOR GARNISH:

25g of chocolate crunch garnish
1 scoop of chocolate hazelnut ice cream
Handful mixed berries

METHOD

- 1** Beat the sugar and eggs together. Add the butter and melted chocolate to the egg mixture and mix on low speed. Set aside.
- 2** Mix the honey and the fresh cream and add to the first mixture. Set aside.
- 3** Mix the flour, cocoa powder and hazelnuts. Add to the previous mixture, mixing thoroughly.
- 4** Butter a tray and place the mix inside making sure it is levelled. Bake at 180C for 15 to 20 mins.
- 5** To serve, cut out a slice of the cake, place chocolate hazelnut ice cream and a few berries on the side.

Make this with:



- 1** The melted chocolate makes the cake a gooey indulgence.



- 2** Honey is a healthier alternative to sugar, for adding sweetness.



- 3** Berries are a classic flavour combination with chocolate.



CHOCOLATE HAZELNUT

Choco-hazelnut ice cream with coffee sauce ripple and chocolate coated hazel nuts.



On test: Barbecue grills

Essential home gadgets reviewed.



Beefeater signature 3000E gas barbecue

This snazzy gas BBQ set is definitely one the men will love, and perfect for a big family or barbecue party. With three grill burners, as well as the thoughtful addition of dedicated warming plates on both sides of the burners, it is designed to help you above and beyond your grilling needs.

What we liked: The best feature of this unit was the transparent glass cover, as it

makes it easier to check on food while it is grilling, without having to open the hood, which causes heat loss. The glass cover also has a thermometer on it, which is very handy, especially for first-timers. The unit takes approximately three minutes to warm up and the food is ready to be grilled after just a few minutes. The heat from the flame is quite intense – something like chicken was cooked through in less than five minutes – which translates to energy saving, as the burner can be switched off quite quickly.

What we didn't like: It was hard to pinpoint any negatives, but if I do have a small pet peeve, it would be the fact that the barbecue sits on four wheels, but the locking function is on just the two smaller ones. This made the set a little wobbly, especially during the initial assembly.

To buy: Dhs4,950, at Dubai Garden Centre.

User tip

Take advantage of the thermometer, as it is very accurate.



Weber One-Touch Premium Plus charcoal barbecue

As any barbecue aficionado will tell you, the Weber name is something of a bbq institution – that classic bowl shape has been imitated by many, but they don't quite compare. In its all-new 2012 edition, the barbecue comes not only with a variety of snazzy new features, but also in a lovely Wedgewood blue colour.

What we liked: The unit was simple and easy to use with the handy chimney starter (available at an additional price) being a bbq life-saver – as the name suggests, it's a narrow chimney unit in which you fire up the charcoals, which gets them going much faster than when spread out across the barbecue base. Once the embers are lit, the coals are transferred to where they belong, making for a far more efficient bbq experience. Other features like an aluminium air vent, and in-built thermometer all help towards a smooth, even, perfectly-done barbecue – whatever the ingredient. It rates high in its user-friendliness too, with the heat shield on the handle making it safer and accident-proof, and the new One-Touch cleaning system which makes sooty post-bbq messes a thing of the past.

What we didn't like: If we had to nitpick, it would probably be the fact that you need a table around to keep all the bbq gear within reach – as most modern bbqs come with side shelves.

To buy: Dhs1,240, available at Ace, select Spinneys and Waitrose outlets and leading garden centres.

User tip

The briquette measuring scoop is useful for getting just the right amounts in when required.



Char-Broil 2-Burner gas grill

The two-burner gas grill is perfect for a couple or a small family, and can be fired up just about any day of the week – making it great for impromptu weekday barbecues. With its all-black, slate-board look, the compact mobile unit is equally suitable for a villa or an apartment.

What we liked: The BBQ unit has two shelves on either sides of the unit, where ingredients, plates and trays can be kept. This is definitely an advantage as food can be piled up on trays, before serving. Clear instructions on how to use the grill, are stated on the front side of the BBQ set, near the knobs, and is a much easier way of demonstrating instructions, so anyone can take over the reins of the bbq with ease. The grill heats up within ten minutes of switching on, and remains hot for at least 20 minutes after being switched off – longer if the hood is closed. This is good if you need to warm up food immediately, without having to switch on the burners. Another really handy feature was the tray, placed behind the grill, which collects all the grease.

What we didn't like: The grill ticks all the boxes, from convenience, to its intended purpose of grilling smoky flavoured and tender meat, chicken and seafood. The only minor issue was that the gaps between the bars on the grate were too big – making it easy for small pieces of food to fall through.

To buy: Dhs699, available exclusively at Ace outlets.

User tip

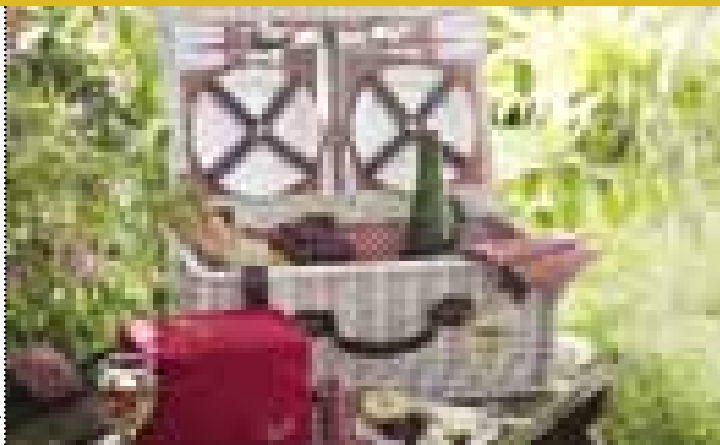
Make sure that the grease tray is always attached and cleaned on a regular basis.

Aisle file

Gorgeous gourmet buys, kitchen gear, foodie accessories, home décor and more.



A magical Arabian nights vibe is easy to achieve with the Azure decorative bottle Dhs189, Azure decorative hurricane Dhs99, and Sayuri metal lantern, Dhs39, from **HOME CENTRE**.



It's picnic season! Grab this gorgeous Optima picnic hamper, Dhs539 from **LAKELAND** – which is completely kitted out for four, with ceramic plates, glasses, cotton napkins, stainless steel cutlery and an insulated food cooler and corkscrew bottle opener – and head outdoors.



This moon candle holder will add a glamorous touch to an outdoor dining table, creating a romantic setting for an alfresco dinner. Dhs990, from **O DE'ROSE**.



These long-lasting Point a la ligne Albae Florae candles are perfect to line along the pathway of a garden or patio, at your next party. Dhs225 each, **BLOOMINGDALE'S HOME**.

Grill, steam and bake with this all-in-one WonderChef gas oven tandoor, by Sanjeev Kapoor, and enjoy the smoky stone-grill flavour in kebabs as well as steamed vegetables, without the hassle of smoke emissions. Dhs343, at **CITRUSSTV.COM**.



Raise the style bar at your next party by serving canapés on this gorgeous Christofle Jardin d'Eden tray. Dhs1,360 at **TANAGRA STORES**.



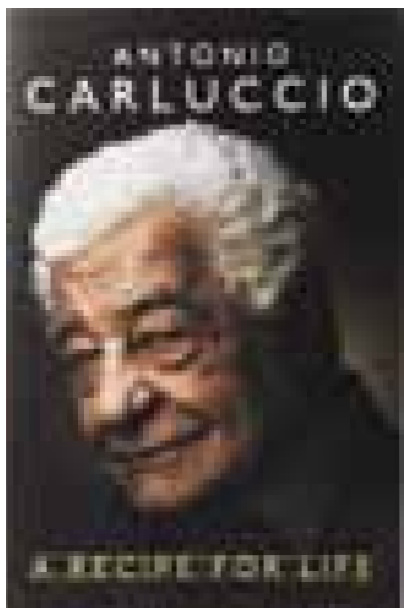
Planning a camping trip over the weekend? Let kids toast marshmallows to make s'mores, with this child-friendly Mallow lance, Dhs75, at **HARVEST HOME**, and watch their delight!



Celebrate the festival of lights with this premium silk box of 18 indulgent gourmet chocolates, Dhs87, from **FORREY & GALLAND**.

Culina-reads

Reviews of the latest cookbooks, food shows and mobile apps.



★ A recipe for life by Antonio Carluccio (Hardie Grant books)

A colourful life, global recognition, a passion and talent for Italian cuisine – these are all ingredients that make for a riveting read. While Carluccio has been prolific in authoring cookbooks, this autobiographical memoir is a first for him, where he all but bares his soul. Intensely personal and disarmingly candid, the book takes the reader through his life, from childhoods spent foraging for mushrooms in the forest, to finding love, dealing with loss, and fame, and ultimately, finding fulfillment, looking back at a life fully lived.

With stories more interesting than any work of fiction, punctuated by some of his favourite recipes – ranging from a simple spaghetti with garlic and chilli, to the more complex Hare in red wine with grapefruit – and personal photographs, Antonio takes the reader along in the journeys that took him from his native Italy to Austria, Germany, and eventually London. This is a book you will find hard to put down once you start.

Dhs145, available at Carluccio's Deli, Dubai Mall



★ Eating and cheating by Gill Holcombe

(Hodder & Stoughton)

A cookbook with a difference, this is a must for all the modern busy, pressed-for-time women out there,

who are looking to make simple, healthy meals without slaving over their stove for hours. Written from the point of view of a non-conformist cook and foodie, the recipes are divided into practical sections such as Yummy (light meals); Slummy (Quick and easy for weeknights); Earth Mummy (back-to-basics recipes); and Hostess with the Mostest (which covers all things entertaining, from kids' birthday parties to girls' nights in, and, wait for it – Hangover cures). With cute retro-style illustrations, and easy-to-follow instructions and tips, you'll wonder how you ever got by without this book!

Dhs105, available at Booksplus



★ Cardamom and Lime: Recipes from the Arabian Gulf by Sarah Al-Hamad

(New Holland)

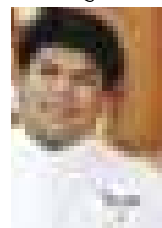
Even after years spent living in the Gulf, its cuisine remains a mystery to many of us.

This book attempts to

offer a window into the fascinating, rich culinary heritage of the Al Khaleej states – clearly differentiating it from the broader, Lebanese-dominated Middle Eastern cuisine it gets overshadowed by, all too often. Accompanied by evocative snapshots of street life, and an educative introduction that offers an insight into the culture and history that shaped the cuisine, the book divides the recipes by ingredients, such as Rice – which has everything from pilafs to sweet rice – and Vegetables, and of course, Meat, to a separate section dedicated to teas and coffees. Going beyond being just a recipe book, Cardamom and Lime helps paint an authentic picture of the social nature of food in this region.

Dhs70, available at Booksplus

On my bookshelf. . .



★ We ask the pros to tell us about the cookbook they can't live without.

This month,

Andrew Paderes, Executive Chef at The Gramercy DIFC

"My favourite cookbook is *Professional Cooking* by Wayne Gisslen (Wiley). This was my very first cookbook and is very special to me because it was a gift from my wife. I think a lot of chefs own a copy in different editions. During my early years in cooking, it was regarded as The Bible for training chefs. Even now, I flip through its pages sometimes for reference!

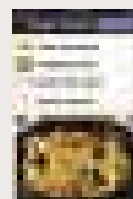
Watch this:

★ The Barefoot Contessa, 2:30pm on Food Network

The show that turned American hostess Ina



Garten into something of a household name amongst foodies, continues to showcase mouth-watering recipes she cooks up at her home in The Hamptons, as she opens up her doors to viewers. Known as 'the hostess with the mostest,' Ina shares her tips and techniques on how to entertain stylishly, while cooking inspired by her travels around the world.



Download this:

★ Tapas Lite, Free for I-Phone

The ultimate guide to mouth-watering Spanish cuisine, this

handy app is perfect for anyone who enjoys Spanish food. With separate categories for tapas, traditional dishes, fish recipes and desserts, informative descriptions and recipes are accompanied by enticing images. It's like teleporting yourself to Spain via your mobile. Ole!

Tried & tasted



Each month, we review two of the city's top tables.

Indian



Where: **Signature by Sanjeev Kapoor at Melia Dubai**

What it's like: Forget any preconceived notions you might have had of Indian restaurants – this is modern, sophisticated Indian, without a hint of Bollywood kitsch in sight! The contemporary design of the hotel carries through into the restaurant, with crushed organza drapes adding elegance to the earthy brown-themed interiors. The menu is like a journey across India and beyond, with dishes like Podi crusted salmon and Chicken parmesan tikka catching our fancy. In the end, I settled for Crab anari tikka with fried scallops and tomato chutney, while the chicken tikka, served alongside neza kebab and chicken seekhpa – making it a platter of three types of chicken kebabs – was my partner's finger-licking choice, for starters. When it comes to portion sizes, the restaurant goes back to typical Indian traditions however, with servings being generous, to say the least. Although we were worried about space left for mains, that did not deter us from ordering a Sarson ka saag Gharha gosht (a slow-cooked lamb dish), a chicken gravy, yellow dal (lentils) and the Dum nariyali prawns (coconut prawns) – which came highly recommended – served in the coconut shell it is cooked in, to share. With fresh rotis and rice to mop it all up with, the rich, layered flavours were thoroughly enjoyed.

My partner had his eye on the Carrot halwa – served here with an orange sabayon – from the moment he looked at the menu first, and I decided to get a bit adventurous with the Mascarpone phirni with parmesan figs. While dessert was definitely the highlight of our meal, the parmesan in a sweet dish still remains a bit of a question mark with me!

If you want to go: Around Dhs450 for two, without drinks. Call 04-3868111.

Best for:
An introduction
to Indian
flavours

- Sudeshna Ghosh



Where: **Handi at Taj Palace Hotel**

What it's like: The award-winning restaurant offers an authentic experience, from the décor, which is made up of gold and beige interiors, and domed ceilings, to the melodic live music, and traditional food that matches the ambience. With a craving for a sweetish butter chicken, I knew exactly what I was going to order until the chef informed me it was amongst the dishes in the thali (platter of a variety of dishes), that I shouldn't miss! To begin with, we tried different papads with pickles – the papaya and mango pickle is highly recommended – and ordered a plate of Lassoni Jhinga (Prawns with garlic) that had a beautiful tandoori aroma, and a hint of spice and garlic in every bite. We also tucked into a plate of kebabs such as mutton kebabs, chicken tandoori and fish tandoori – which were tender and paired well with the mint chutney. We wanted to sample a few different curries, so, chose the non-vegetarian thali, that was served in a copper plate. The thali included butter chicken, a mutton gravy dish, dal makani (lentils), a salad, and yoghurt, along with super-soft butter naans (Indian flatbread). The butter chicken was without doubt, my favourite, while the mutton in thick gravy was highly rated by my partner. We also ate a vegetable biryani that was covered in puff pastry that tasted divine. But, in spite of trying so many things, no Indian meal feels complete without desserts, right? We chose, Gajar halwa (carrot pudding) which was served fresh and hot, providing a beautiful sweet end to my meal. My partner chose the Ras Malai (sweet dumplings), which was devoured before I could taste it, and looked like a cloud of cream, that apparently melted in the mouth.

If you want to go: Unlicensed restaurant. Diwali set menu starts from Dhs135 per head. Call 04-2113079.

Best for:
A traditional
Indian
experience

- Nicola Monteath

Flavours of the month

Our pick of the best restaurant offers, promotions and deals this month.

✴ Grecian gastronomy

Experience a slice of Greece in the heart of Bur Dubai, at the hidden gem that is Elia restaurant in Majestic Hotel. Their new menu includes modern takes on traditional Greek cuisine – think tuna with wild greens and lemongrass sauce, beetroot confit with arsenic cheese saganaki, and veal flank steak with onion kefta – alongside authentic favourites in a leafy, Mediterranean-esque setting.

Available daily, call 04-3598888.



✴ Sweet sundae

Travel back in time to the 50s in America, by visiting the vintage-style Soda Box diner at Mall of the Emirates, to feast on meat-and-sauce-loaded burgers, French fries and creamy smoothies.

Available daily for Dhs80 per head, for a set menu. Call 04-3772000.

✴ Starry brunch

Savour dishes from eight live cooking stations, at the United flavours of Anise brunch at InterContinental Dubai Festival City – to symbolise the eight points of the star anise – and treat your taste buds to authentic French and Mongolian cuisine, plus sushi, steak and cheese.

Fridays from Dhs325 per head.

Call 04-7011127.

✴ Tea with a twist

Grab the girls for a Vietnamese themed afternoon at Voi, Jumeirah Zaabeel Saray and sip a selection of Asian teas while trying out Asian inspired scones, finger foods and exotic sweet treats.

Thursday to Saturday, from Dhs160 per head.

Call 04-4530444.



✴ Dim sum mania

Head down to Shanghai Chic at Movenpick Hotel Ibn Battuta Gate, for the bottomless dim sum promotion that includes seafood buns, baby back pork ribs, bean rolls, and a platter of crispy wasabi prawns, oven-baked honey cod in rose tea vinaigrette, and other mouth-watering dishes.

Available on Wednesdays from Dhs139 per head.

Call 04-4445613.

✴ Tres bien!

Celebrate Beaujolais Nouveau Day at Club Millesime, Sofitel Abu Dhabi, and try out dishes from a French-themed buffet, while listening to classic tunes from France and watching the staff dance in berets.

Available until November 22, from Dhs290 per head. Call 02-8137777.

✴ Chilli fiesta

Get a taste of Mexican cuisine by trying out the popular dish Chiles en nogada (green chilli with white walnut sauce and pomegranates) as part of the Mexican Independence Day celebration at El Sombrero Mexican Restaurant, Sheraton Abu Dhabi.

Available from November 10 to 17.

Call 02-6773333.





✴ From Singapore to Dubai

The award-winning Singaporean restaurant StraitsKitchen, Grand Hyatt Singapore, will once again be bringing its contemporary market-place style cuisine to Dubai, with guest chefs from Singapore, Mahathir Bin Ya, and Tan Chek Chuan, serving Indian, Chinese and Malay cuisine at Pepper Crab, Grand Hyatt Dubai. Try out an à la carte menu with dishes such as Mee Goreng and the signature Chilli and pepper crabs with other popular dishes, as they take over the kitchens at the restaurant for a week.

Available from November 12 to 18. Call 04-3172222.



✴ Backyard BBQ

Wind down the end of the weekend at the Sizzling Saturday backyard barbecue, held at Double Decker Garden, Al Murooj Rotana Dubai, and enjoy grilled chicken, ribs, steak and other delicious treats.

Every Saturday from Dhs169 per head.

Call 04-3211111.

✴ High tea with a view

A high tea experience isn't complete without freshly baked scones served with Devonshire farmhouse clotted cream. So, sit back and indulge at Nineteen, The Address Montgomerie Dubai, as you refresh yourself with cups of tea and try out the pastries and finger sandwiches, while looking out at the tranquil green golf course.

Available from Sunday to Thursday from, Dhs60 per head. Call 04-3905600.



✴ Diwali delights

- An aromatic selection of traditional Indian dishes and sweets are on offer at Amala, Jumeirah Zaabeel Saray. Savour delicious food while enjoying live Indian music.

Available until November 14, from Dhs285 per head. Call 04-4530444.

- Diwali is the perfect excuse to feast on Indian cuisine, so head to Zafran, Dubai Marina Mall and Mirdiff City Centre, to try their fixed-price kebab selection, served with biryani, dal bukhari (lentils), a daily special vegetable dish, bread basket and dessert.

Available daily, from Dhs89 per head.

Call 04-3997357.

STARTERS EATING OUT



✴ Lunch by the beach

Foodies can enjoy a relaxed Arabian-style lunch buffet at Olea, St. Regis Saadiyat Island Resort, Abu Dhabi and tuck into fresh mezze, grilled seafood from live cooking stations and other delicacies, while listening to the soothing waves of the ocean.

Every Friday, from Dhs215 per head.

Call 02-4988888.

✴ Truffles galore

Italian truffles are back in season! Head down to Bice restaurant, Hilton Dubai Jumeirah Resort, to taste a special truffle menu created by chef Cosimo Danese, as he adds truffles to fettuccini with butter, quail eggs, pizza and even ice cream – which we are sure will taste heavenly!

Available daily, call 04-3182520.

✴ Thanksgiving treats

- Give thanks and enjoy feast at Traiteur, Park Hyatt Dubai's Thanksgiving buffet dinner. Make your way through the live cooking stations, to try out the maple glazed whole roast turkey with trimmings, roasted pumpkin and creamed potato with chevre, and to end, pumpkin pie and a decadent pecan tart.

Available on November 23 only, from Dhs425 per head. Call 04-3172222.

- Make a reservation at Dunes café, Shangri-La Dubai, for eight people or more, and get a complimentary turkey with trimmings at your table, to feast on, while trying out popular American specialties from the buffet.


Available on November 23 only, from Dhs210 per head. Call 04-3438888.



MARGARITA MADNESS



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group
Hospitality Division
★★★★★

Home Cooking

Inspiring recipes for easy
everyday meals and stylish
weekend entertaining

IN THIS SECTION



* Simple
weeknight
suppers, P20



* Pack up a
feast for a
road trip, P38

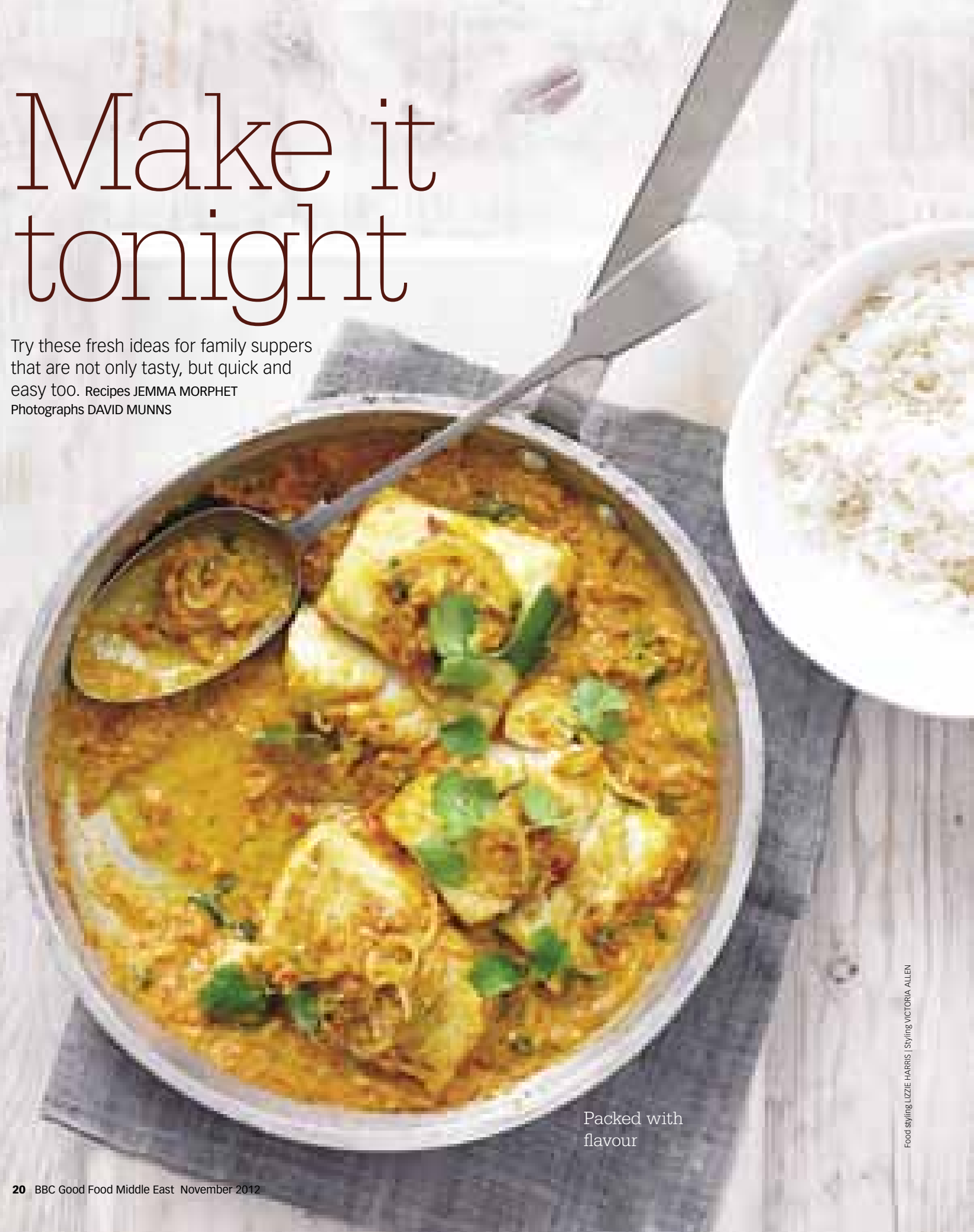


* Vegetarian
Indian feast for
Diwali, P50

Macadamia & cranberry
American cookies, recipe p55

Make it tonight

Try these fresh ideas for family suppers that are not only tasty, but quick and EASY too. Recipes JEMMA MORPHET
Photographs DAVID MUNNS



Packed with
flavour

Fried fish & tomato curry

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS •

COOK 25 MINS **Easy**  **Low cal**  **2 of 5-a-day****2 tbsp vegetable oil, plus 2 tsp****2 onions, thinly sliced****8 large vine tomatoes, roughly chopped****4 garlic cloves****Thumb-sized piece ginger, roughly chopped****3 tbsp Madras curry paste****165ml can coconut milk****Large handful coriander, finely chopped, plus extra sprigs to serve****500g pollack fillets, skinned****6 tbsp plain flour****Basmati rice, to serve**

1 Heat 2 tsp oil in a pan. Tip in the onions and a pinch of salt. Cook for about 8 mins until soft and golden.

2 Meanwhile, blitz the tomatoes, garlic and ginger in a food processor to a smooth purée. Add the curry paste to the onions and fry for 3 mins more. Stir in the tomato mix and simmer for 10 mins until thickened. Add the coconut milk and chopped coriander. Simmer again to thicken.

3 Dust the fish fillets in some seasoned flour. Heat the remaining oil in a non-stick frying pan. Cook the fillets, in batches, over a high heat for 1 min or so on each side, until they begin to brown. Carefully place fish in the tomato mixture and simmer until just cooked through. Scatter over coriander sprigs and serve with rice.

PER SERVING 432 kcals, protein 30g, carbs 33g, fat 19g, sat fat 7g, fibre 5g, sugar 9g, salt 0.8g



Zesty Mexican punch

Spicy chicken, mango & jalapeño salad

SERVES 4 • PREP 15 MINS • NO COOK

Easy  **Low cal**  **Folate**  **Vit C**  **2 of 5-a-day****250g pack cherry tomatoes, sliced or quartered****2 tbsp finely chopped jalapeños**
Small handful coriander, roughly chopped**Juice 1 lime, plus halves to serve****1 small red onion, finely chopped****1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil****4 cooked chicken breasts, torn into bite-sized shreds****2 Little Gem lettuces, torn into bite-sized pieces****1 red pepper, deseeded and sliced****1 ripe mango, stoned, peeled and diced****Handful tortilla chips, broken up a little**

1 Put the cherry tomatoes, jalapeños, coriander, lime juice, onion and oil in a large bowl with some seasoning.

2 Pop the remaining ingredients, except the tortilla chips, on top of the dressing. Gently mix the salad together to coat.

3 Sprinkle the tortilla chips over the top and serve immediately with lime halves.

PER SERVING 481 kcals, protein 22g, carbs 37g, fat 27g, sat fat 6g, fibre 6g, sugar 15g, salt 1.5g



Low-carb veggie meal

Aubergine rolls with spinach & ricotta

SERVES 4 • PREP 15 MINS •

COOK 45 MINS **Easy** **V** **GF**

Calcium Folate Fibre Vit C Iron 3 of 5-a-day

2 aubergines, cut into thin slices lengthways
2 tbsp olive oil
500g spinach
250g tub ricotta
Grating of nutmeg
350g jar tomato sauce
4 tbsp fresh breadcrumbs
4 tbsp grated Parmesan
(or vegetarian alternative)

1 Heat oven to 220C/200C fan. Brush both sides of the aubergine slices with

oil, then lay on a large baking sheet. Bake for 15-20 mins until tender, turning once.

2 Meanwhile, put the spinach in a large colander and pour over a kettle of boiling water to wilt. Cool, then squeeze out the excess water, so that it is dry. Mix with the ricotta, nutmeg and plenty of seasoning.

3 Dollop a spoonful of the cheesy spinach mix in the centre of each aubergine slice, fold over to make a parcel and lay, sealed-side down, in an ovenproof dish. Pour over tomato sauce, sprinkle with breadcrumbs and cheese, and bake for 20-25 mins until golden and piping hot.

PER SERVING 376 kcals, protein 20g, carbs 23g, fat 23g, sat fat 9g, fibre 10g, sugar 12g, salt 1.3g



Smoked trout, beetroot & horseradish flatbread

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS •

COOK 8 MINS **Easy** **GF** **Low fat** **Low cal** **Omega-3**

4 flatbreads

olive oil, for brushing

2 tbsp creamed horseradish

2 tbsp crème fraîche

Small bunch dill, ½ chopped,
½ picked into small fronds

Squeeze lemon juice, plus
pinch of zest

3 cooked beetroots (not in vinegar),
very thinly sliced

4 smoked trout fillets, broken
into large flakes

Mixed salad leaves, to serve (optional)

1 Heat oven to 220C/200C fan. Brush the flatbreads with olive oil. Put on a large baking sheet and pop in the oven for about 8 mins until crisp round the edges.

2 Meanwhile, mix the horseradish, crème fraîche, chopped dill, lemon juice and zest, and some seasoning. Add a few drops of water to loosen mixture to a drizzling consistency.

3 Top each flatbread with some beetroot slices and smoked trout. Drizzle over the horseradish sauce, sprinkle with dill fronds and serve with salad, if you like.

PER SERVING 327 kcals, protein 21g, carbs 42g, fat 10g, sat fat 4g, fibre 3g, sugar 5g, salt 2.1g **GF**

5 ways with salads

These easy salads work well both as barbecue sides, as well as a light main meal. Recipes ADAM RUSSELL

Photograph GARETH MORGANS

Mediterranean prawn salad

SERVES 2 • PREP 15 MINS • NO COOK

Easy Low cal Folate Vit C 2 of 5-a-day

Mix **juice 1 lemon** with **4 tbsp extra virgin olive oil** and a **pinch dried chilli flakes**. Add **1 sliced red onion** and **1 sliced fennel bulb**, then set aside for 7-8 mins to soften a little. Mix in **1 large handful rocket** and **200g cooked prawns**. Season and serve with **garlic bread**.

PER SERVING 311 kcals, protein 18g, carbs 8g, fat 24g, sat fat 3g, fibre 5g, sugar 6g, salt 1.6g

Chorizo, pepper & chickpea salad

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS • NO COOK

Easy Low cal Folate 2 of 5-a-day

In a large bowl, mix **3 roasted red peppers**, cut into strips, a **70g bag rocket** and **2 x 400g cans drained and rinsed chickpeas**. Put on a large platter and top with **200g sliced cooked chorizo**. Mix **juice ½ lemon** with **3 tbsp olive oil**, season, then drizzle over the salad and serve.

PER SERVING 378 kcals, protein 16g, carbs 26g, fat 21g, sat fat 6g, fibre 5g, sugar 2g, salt 1.6g

Pesto chicken & broccoli pasta

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS • COOK 15 MINS

Easy Fibre Vit C Good for you

Cook **300g penne** following pack instructions, adding a **small head broccoli**, broken into florets, for the final 3 mins of cooking. Drain, rinse to cool and drain again. Mix in **200g shredded chicken**, **5 tbsp pesto** and a **handful sliced sundried tomatoes**. Season and serve.

PER SERVING 533 kcals, protein 21g, carbs 66g, fat 20g, sat fat 4g, fibre 6g, sugar 4g, salt 1.4g

Mediterranean prawn salad

Tuna Niçoise

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS • COOK 10 MINS

Easy Low cal Folate 2 of 5-a-day Good for you

Put **500g baby new potatoes** in a large saucepan of boiling salted water. Add **3 eggs** and cook for 8 mins, then add **200g green beans** and cook for a further 2 mins. Drain everything and rinse under a cold tap to cool. Remove the eggs, peel, quarter and set aside. Mix together the beans and potatoes with leaves from **2 heads Little Gem lettuce**, a **large handful halved cherry tomatoes**, a **small handful halved black olives** and **185g can tuna in spring water**, drained and flaked. Top with the egg. Mix **1 tbsp red wine vinegar** with **3 tbsp olive oil**, season and drizzle over.

PER SERVING 306 kcals, protein 16g, carbs 24g, fat 16g, sat fat 3g, fibre 6g, sugar 5g, salt 0.5g

Roast squash & goat's cheese salad

SERVES 2 • PREP 10 MINS • COOK 15 MINS

Easy V Calcium Folate Fibre Vit C Iron 3 of 5-a-day

Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Put **1 small butternut squash**, deseeded and cut into wedges, on a baking tray. Drizzle with **2 tsp olive oil**, season and roast for 15 mins until tender. Allow to cool a little, then spread an **80g bag baby spinach** over a serving platter. Top with the squash and **100g crumbled goat's cheese**. Mix **2 tbsp balsamic vinegar** and **2 tbsp olive oil**, season, then drizzle over the salad. Sprinkle with **2 tbsp pumpkin seeds** and serve.

PER SERVING 475 kcals, protein 19g, carbs 29g, fat 31g, sat fat 12g, fibre 9g, sugar 16g, salt 1.0g

Everyday healthy

Stay on track all week with these good-for-you suppers. Recipes JENNY WHITE
Photographs LIS PARSONS

All cooked
in one dish

Moroccan-style chicken stew

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 MINS • COOK 20 MINS

Easy Low fat Superhealthy 2 of 5-a-day

1 tbsp olive oil
1 onion, chopped
1 garlic clove, crushed
1 tbsp ras-el-hanout or Moroccan spice mix
4 skinless chicken breasts, sliced
300ml reduced-salt chicken stock
400g can chickpeas, drained
12 dried apricots, sliced
Small bunch coriander, chopped

1 Heat the oil in a large shallow pan, then cook the onion for 3 mins. Add the garlic and spices and cook for a further min.

2 Tip in the chicken and cook for 3 mins, then pour in the chicken stock, chickpeas and apricots. Simmer for 5 mins or until the chicken is cooked through. Stir through the coriander and serve immediately with couscous and a green salad, if you like.

PER SERVING 309 kcals, protein 40g, carbs 24g, fat 6g, sat fat 1g, fibre 5g, sugar 13g, salt 0.66g



Roast pork with apples & mustard

SERVES 4 • PREP 15 MINS •

COOK 35 MINS **Easy** **P** **Low fat**

Superhealthy 1 of 5-a-day

1 tbsp olive oil
3 eating apples
500g pork fillet, sliced into medallions
200ml reduced-salt chicken stock
1 tbsp wholegrain mustard
1 tbsp chopped sage leaves
2 tbsp half-fat crème fraîche

1 Heat half the oil in a large frying pan. Core and cut the apples into wedges, then cook for about 10 mins

until caramelised and softened. Remove from the pan and set aside. Heat the remaining oil. Fry the pork on each side for 2 mins. Add the stock and mustard to the pan, then bubble for 5 mins or until the pork is cooked through. Return the apples to the pan with the sage and cook for 1 min more.

2 Remove from the heat and stir in the crème fraîche and some seasoning.

PER SERVING 246 kcals, protein 28g, carbs 12g, fat 10g, sat fat 3g, fibre 2g, sugar 11g, salt 0.39g

Punchy flavours

Simple and
satisfying

Spaghetti with spinach & walnut pesto

SERVES 4 • PREP 15 MINS •

COOK 15 MINS **Easy** **V** **Low fat**

Fibre **Iron** **1 of 5-a-day**

1 garlic clove, crushed
50g walnuts, roughly chopped
small bunch mint, roughly chopped
small bunch parsley, roughly
chopped
zest and juice 1 lemon
350g wholewheat spaghetti
50g raisins
100g bag baby spinach leaves

1 Whizz the garlic, walnuts, herbs,
lemon zest and juice with some
seasoning in a food processor until
finely chopped.

2 Cook the spaghetti following pack
instructions, then drain, reserving a
little of the cooking water. Return to
the pan and stir in the pesto, raisins
and spinach with a splash of cooking
water. Serve with a drizzle of extra
virgin olive oil, if you like.

PER SERVING 414 kcals, protein 15g, carbs 68g, fat
11g, sat fat 1g, fibre 9g, sugar 13g, salt 0.40g

Salmon noodle soup

SERVES 4 • PREP 15 MINS •

COOK 20 MINS **Easy** **V** **Low fat** **Superhealthy**

Heart healthy **Omega-3** **1 of 5-a-day**

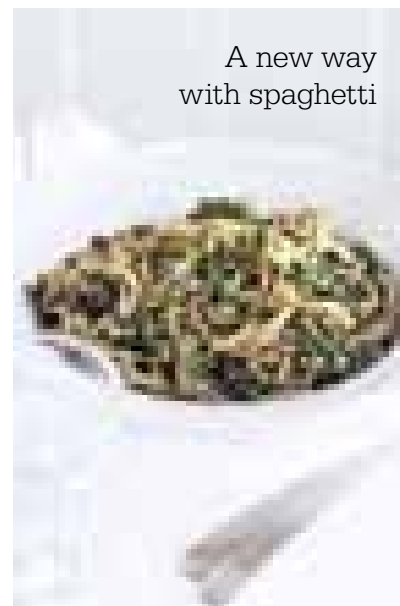
1 litre low-salt chicken stock
2 tsp Thai red curry paste
100g flat rice noodles
150g pack shiitake mushrooms, sliced
125g pack baby corn, sliced
2 skinless salmon fillets, sliced
juice 2 limes
1 tbsp reduced-salt soy sauce
Pinch brown sugar
Small bunch coriander, chopped

1 Pour the stock into a large pan, bring
to the boil, then stir in the curry paste.
Add the noodles and cook for 8 mins.
Tip in the mushrooms and corn and
cook for 2 mins more.

2 Add the salmon to the pan and cook
for 3 mins or until cooked through.
Remove from the heat and stir in the
lime juice, soy sauce and a pinch of
sugar. Ladle into 4 bowls and sprinkle
over the coriander just before you serve.

PER SERVING 265 kcals, protein 19g, carbs 27g,
fat 10g, sat fat 2g, fibre 1g, sugar 4g, salt 0.83g

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Soup it up

There's nothing like a hearty soup when it's cold outside. These restaurant-style recipes take this quintessential comfort food to the next level.

Recipes SARAH COOK Photographs PETE CASSIDY

Cauliflower soup with sheep's cheese puffs

SERVES 6

1 onion, chopped
50g butter
1 large cauliflower
200g potatoes, diced
500ml whole milk
500ml vegetable stock
FOR THE CHEESE PUFF
40g butter
125ml water
75g plain flour
75g hard cheese, Wigmore or Pecorino, grated
2 eggs
A few chives

- 1** Fry the onions in butter until soft, then break cauliflower into small florets and add to the onion mixture.
- 2** Add potato, milk and vegetable stock. Bring to a simmer then cover and gently cook for 15-20 mins until the veg are tender.
- 3** Purée, sieve back into a pan, season and adjust the consistency with a splash more milk.
- 4** For the cheese puff, melt butter in water, then bring to the boil and quickly beat in plain flour until smooth. Leave for 2 mins then put in a processor and whizz in eggs one-by-one, followed by the cheese.
- 5** Dollop rounded teaspoons of the mixture onto baking parchment-lined sheets. Scatter with a little more finely grated cheese and bake at 220C/200C fan for 10 mins, then turn down to 180C/160C fan, for 20 mins.
- 6** Heat the soup and serve in shallow bowls with a scattering of chives and the cheese puffs for dunking.

Styling JENNY IGGLEDEN | Food styling SAL HENLEY



French onion soup

SERVES 4

1.2 kg onions
50g butter
1 tbsp brown sugar
2 tbs plain flour
1.4 l strong beef stock
4 thick slices crusty bread
125g gruyère cheese, grated

1 Halve and finely slice onions and gently fry in butter until really soft and golden, around 20 mins.

2 Turn up the heat and fry, stirring often, until really dark and sticky. Stir in brown sugar and flour for a few minutes.

3 Then stir in beef stock and bring to a simmer for 10-15 mins. Meanwhile, toast bread on one side and apply butter on the other.

4 Divide the soup between oven-proof bowls, top each with a slice of toast (butter side up), scatter over cheese, then grill until the cheese is melted and bubbling. Serve.

If you don't have the right dishes, grill cheese-topped toasts then add to soup.



Chilled pepper soup with crayfish

SERVES 4 🍷

2 shallots, chopped
1 garlic clove
2 seeded red peppers
1 slice of white bread, crustless
400ml passata
150ml vegetable stock
3 tbsp olive oil
2 tbsp white wine vinegar
1 tsp golden caster sugar
180g crayfish tails, peeled
Few basil leaves


- 1** Whizz together the first four ingredients in a blender.
- 2** Press through a sieve into a bowl and stir in rest of the ingredients. Season and chill for a few hours.
- 3** To serve, ladle between shallow bowls, divide crayfish tails between them and garnish with basil leaves and a little drizzle of olive oil before serving.



Spiced carrot and coconut soup

SERVES 6

2 onions, chopped
2 tbsp ginger, chopped
2 tbsp butter
2 tbsp olive oil
1.5kg carrots, chopped and peeled
400g tin coconut milk
800ml vegetable stock
FOR THE COCONUT MIX
6 tbsp desiccated coconut
2 shallots, finely chopped
1 red chilli, finely diced
25g butter
2 shallots, finely chopped
Salt, to taste
Golden caster sugar, to taste

- 1** Soften onions and ginger in butter and olive oil. Add carrots, coconut milk and vegetable stock.
- 2** Bring to a simmer, cover and cook until the carrots are tender. Purée until smooth.
- 3** Spread desiccated coconut on a baking tray and toast, stirring occasionally, at 180C/160C fan for 5-10 mins until golden and crunchy.
- 4** Soften shallots and chilli in butter, then stir in the coconut and season with salt and golden caster sugar.
- 5** Serve hot soup in bowls scattered with the coconut mix. 

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Kitchen notes

Nutrition advice,
expert cooking tips
and product picks
for your pantry.

Go green

We love that organic food shopping choices are popping up all over town, so we're naturally (see what we did there?!) excited about the recent opening of the Green League outlet in Galleries Lafayette. Stocking only organic produce, sourced from around the world, Green League also plans to promote awareness about healthy eating amongst customers. Can't make it to Dubai Mall? Galleries Lafayette have also taken over the Saturday market space at Dubai Garden Centre. Visit www.unifrutti-thegreenleague.com for more information.



Seasonal goodness

Pumpkins are in season now, and you should be stocking up on this colourful, delicious vegetable for more reasons than one. The anti-oxidant and vitamin rich vegetable has multiple health benefits including promoting healthy vision, reversing skin damage and prevention of tumour growth. Pumpkin is also an excellent source of fibre, and helps reduce cholesterol levels, aid digestion, and control blood sugar levels, while protecting against heart diseases.

Look what we found!

3 great new products for your kitchen



There's nothing worse than reaching out for a sandwich, only to find out it is a soggy mess! Pack your weekday lunches in these Fun zipper bags, to ensure food stays fresh until it is ready to eat. Dhs5.



Making homemade sweets and desserts just got a whole lot easier with the new Rainbow condensed milk squeezy pack which is easy to use, and ensures minimum wastage. Dhs4.5.



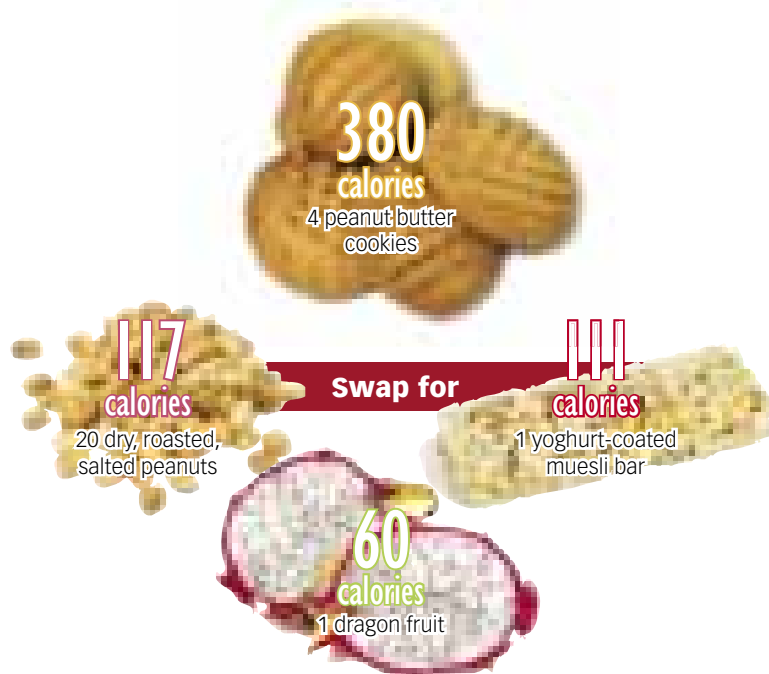
Add a gourmet touch to salads with these gorgeous edible flowers – who knew daisies, chrysanthemums, chicory, lavender and violet could be so delicious? Dhs54 for a box, from Chezcharles.ae.



Dalia's tip of the month

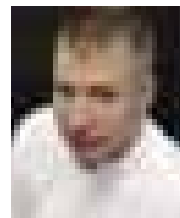
When I cook with canned tomatoes, when making a pasta sauce for instance, I always add a teaspoon of white or brown sugar to remove the acidity and the canned taste from the tomatoes.

SMART FOOD SWAPS



Health update> November 14 is International Diabetes Awareness Day, and there's never a better time to focus on the diabetes pandemic in the region. The UAE has the second-highest rate of diabetes in the world – and it is increasing at an alarming rate. To reduce the risk of becoming another statistic, make sure to include foods such as oily fish (think mackerel, salmon and tuna); vegetables like broccoli; and garlic, in your diet, all of which help lower cholesterol and blood pressure, and maintain sugar and glucose levels. On November 23, make your way down to Oasis Centre to be part of the Landmark group's annual diabetes walkathon, where free blood glucose testing camps and expert advice sessions will also take place. For more information, visit the [Beat Diabetes page on Facebook](#).

License to grill



32 year old Simon James Conboy, from Sheffield, South Yorkshire, UK, developed a passion for

food and cooking through his grandparents, by watching them in their restaurant, while he was growing up. After going through intensive culinary training at Castle College in Sheffield, Simon moved to South London and has since worked at The Forge restaurant in Covent Garden, The British Grand Prix at Silverstone and The Ivy Dubai, before becoming the head chef at Rivington Bar & Grill in Souk Madinat Jumeirah.

Serve with



Simon Conboy, head chef at Rivington Bar & Grill, Souk Madinat Jumeirah Dubai, shows us how to prepare three easy barbecue recipes, and some Middle Eastern-inspired sides from their BBQ brunch menu. Photographs CRIS MEJORADA

Sirloin steak

SERVES 4

1 kg of 150 day grain-fed sirloin steak
(sliced into 250g portions, or evenly cut for 4 people)

Freshly ground black pepper

Salt and pepper

4 Portobello mushrooms

2 plum tomatoes

1 tbsp of olive oil

2 cloves of garlic

A sprinkle of Maldon sea salt

Unsalted butter

1 When the meat is at room temperature, rub in the freshly ground

black pepper and sea salt.

2 Slice tomatoes in half lengthways and peel the Portobello mushrooms. Season with salt and pepper, and drizzle with olive oil.

3 Place the mushroom and tomato in the centre of the BBQ to mark, when marked bring to the side where it is a bit cooler so they can cook through.

4 Place the sirloin steak on the hot area of the BBQ, to seal and mark on both sides, then move to the side where the heat is a bit low, and cook until it reaches your desired doneness. Add maldon salt on top and serve immediately.

Cauliflower hummus

Bring a pan of salted water to boil and cut a **1kg cauliflower** dome into small florets and add to the pan. Cook until they are very soft (about 8 mins). Drain and place in a muslin cloth. Bring the edges together and gently squeeze the cauliflower until all the liquid has drained out. Next, place the cauliflower in a blender, add **35ml fresh or bottled lemon juice**, **200ml olive oil**, **20g tahini**, **3g ground cumin**, **3g ground coriander**, and a **pinch of salt and pepper**. Blend everything until it is smooth – it should be thick and bright white in colour.

Homemade burger

SERVES 4

600g minced beef
 175g beef fat
 75g red onion, diced
 75g red chilli, finely chopped
 20g flat leaf parsley, finely chopped
 45g English mustard
 5g cracked black pepper
 3g salt
 2 whole eggs
FOR THE GARNISH
 100g plum tomato, sliced
 50g red onion, sliced into rings
 50g gherkins, cut into strips length ways
 50g mayonnaise
 100g baby gem lettuce leaf
 Salt and pepper

1 Mix all of the burger ingredients together in a bowl along with the English mustard, cracked black pepper, eggs and salt. Mix well, check the seasoning, and cook a small amount before grilling the burgers, to taste.

2 Divide into 4 burger patties of around the same weight and shape, and refrigerate until ready to cook.

3 Cut a bun in half and toast on the BBQ.

4 Remove the burger patties from the fridge and place on the hot area of the BBQ, to seal and mark on both sides, then move to the side where it is not that hot, to cook the meat to the way you prefer eating it (medium rare or well done). Check if it is cooked through by gently pressing – the juices should run completely clear.

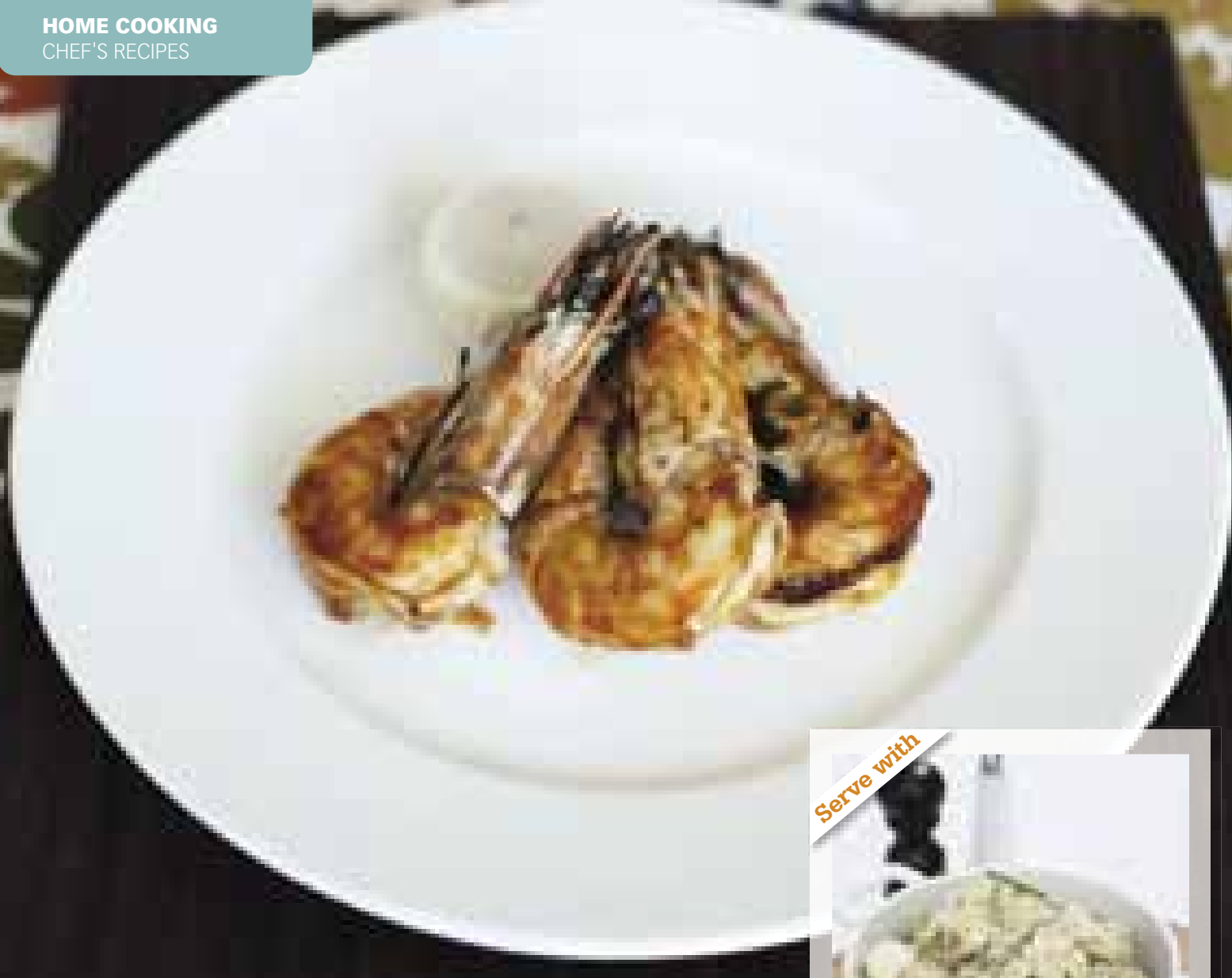
5 Once the burgers are cooked, spread mayonnaise on the top side of the toasted bun.

6 Separate the leaves of the baby gem lettuce, place on the bottom of the bun, add 3 slices of tomato on top. Season with a little salt and pepper, then place 4-5 pieces of the red onion followed by the sliced gherkins, place the patty on top and cover with the top half of the bun. Serve immediately.

Serve with

**Smoked Aubergine**

Slice **2 medium sized aubergines** in half lengthways, then grill for 25mins on the BBQ, turning occasionally until soft – the skin will remain firm, but the flesh will soften. Lift the aubergines off the grill and leave until cool enough to handle. Using a sharp knife, score the grilled flesh and then scoop it out with a spoon. Tip into a bowl and mash with a fork until you get a thick pulp. Mix in **juice of 1 lemon** and **2 to 3 cloves of peeled and crushed garlic**. Add **150ml yoghurt** and a **handful of washed and dried dill**. Season to taste and serve while still warm.



Barbequed Atlantic prawns

SERVES 4

1.2kg Atlantic prawns, head on shell off (around 3-4 per person)

FOR THE GARLIC BUTTER

250g unsalted butter (softened to room temp, take out of fridge and leave for 20 mins)

100g garlic, peeled and finely chopped

100g fresh parsley, chopped

Zest of 1 lemon


Salt and pepper, for tasting

Olive oil for cooking and drizzling

1 Place the Atlantic prawns in a bowl and drizzle over with olive oil, a little squeeze of lemon and a pinch of salt and pepper. Then cover and leave in the fridge to marinate (this can be for up to 4 hrs, or as little as 20 mins).

2 To make the garlic butter, take the softened unsalted butter, and gently mix in the finely chopped garlic, parsley, lemon zest and a pinch of salt and pepper. Lay out a sheet of clingfilm on a flat surface and slowly spoon the garlic butter onto the cling film in a long tube shape. Then roll the cling film up so that you have a contained tube and tie at the ends. Place this in the fridge until it hardens. (This can be kept in the fridge and used for other recipes too).

3 When ready to cook, place the marinated prawns on the grill, and cook for 2 mins on each side. Remove from the heat, and place on a plate.

4 Slice a 1cm slab of garlic butter from the tube in the fridge and place on top of the prawns on each plate, so it melts (more can be used if you like them more garlicky). Serve hot. 

Serve with



Potato and chives salad

Boil **1kg small potatoes** for 15 mins in salted water or until tender, then drain and cool. Mix **4 chopped garlic cloves** and **100g mayonnaise** together in a small bowl or jar, with some **salt** and **pepper** to make the dressing. To serve, mix **3 finely sliced spring onions**, a **handful of chopped parsley** and a **handful of chopped mint** into the dressing, then pour the whole mixture over the potatoes. Stir gently, taking care not to break the potatoes up. Scatter with more spring onions, parsley and mint on the top of each serving and season to taste.

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If you're off on a long road trip or are planning a picnic, these dishes are easy to transport – just wrap them well and pack them with an ice block or two.

Cool-bag foods

Ciabatta filled with frittata & rocket

SERVES 6-8 • PREP 25-35 MINS PLUS COOLING • COOK 30 MINS **Easy**

8 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
2 large red onions, sliced
1-2 mild red chillies, deseeded and cut into strips
3 large red peppers, quartered and deseeded
6 eggs
2 tbsp chopped fresh parsley
2 ciabatta loaves
50g freshly grated Parmesan
50g rocket

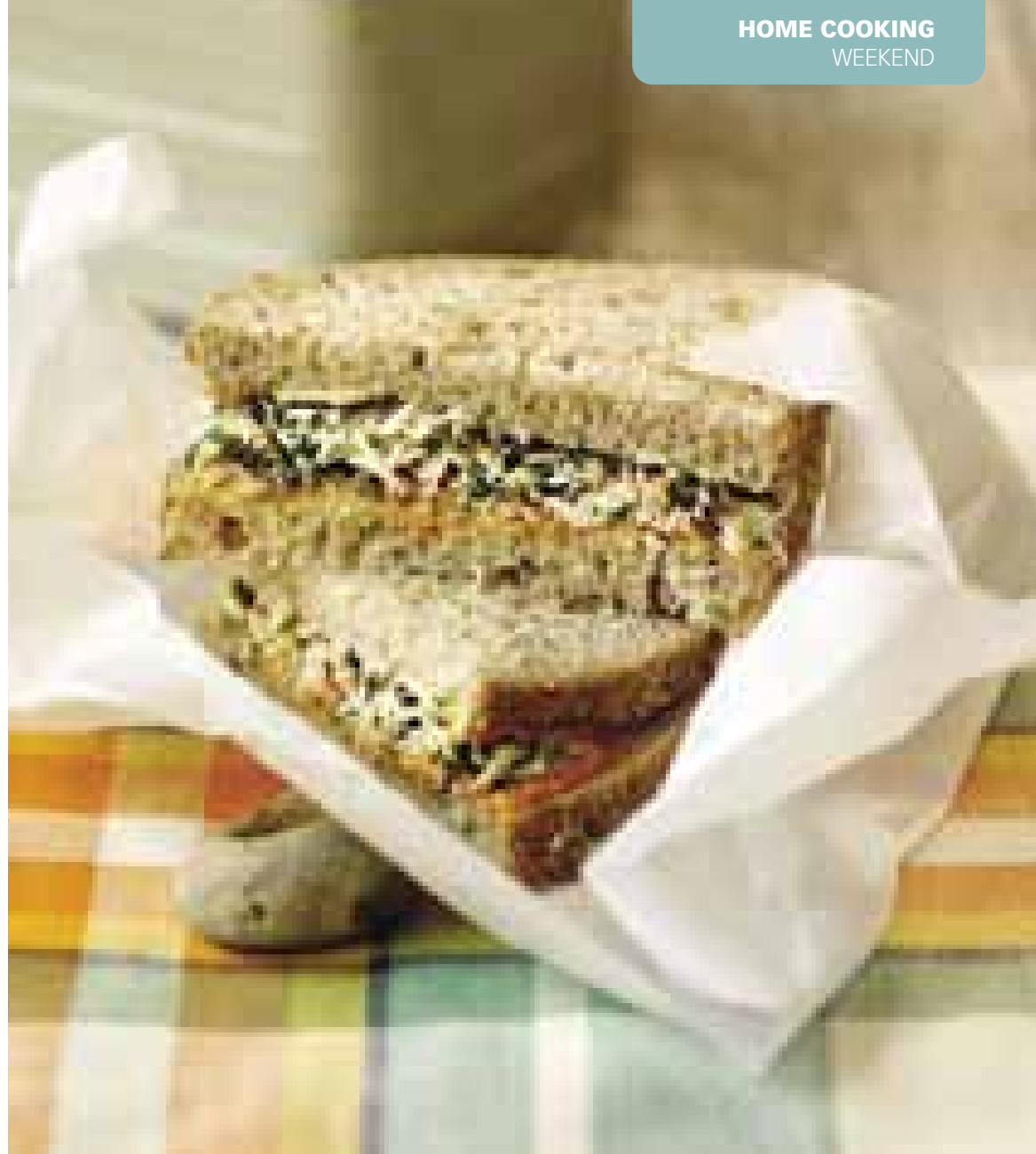
1 Heat 2 tbsp oil in a 20cm deep frying pan and cook the onions for 2-3 mins. Lower the heat and fry for 5 mins until starting to brown. Add the chillies and cook for 2-3 mins. Set aside and wipe out the pan with kitchen paper.

2 Meanwhile, grill the peppers, skin side to the heat, for 8 mins until the skin is black and blistered. Put in a bowl, cover and leave for 10 mins before peeling. Cut the peppers into long, thin strips.

3 Beat the eggs with 1 tsp salt, plenty of pepper and the parsley. Heat 2 tbsp oil in the same pan, add the onion, chilli and pepper and cook for 1 min. Pour in the eggs and cook over a medium heat until the bottom sets and turns golden. Ease the edges of the frittata from the sides as it cooks, and tilt so the uncooked egg runs underneath. When almost set, put the frittata under the grill until set.

4 Halve each ciabatta loaf horizontally and press down the inside to make a slight hollow. Sprinkle each half with 1 tbsp oil. Cut the frittata into 4 strips and pack 2 into each loaf. Divide the cheese and rocket between the loaves and replace the tops. Wrap in cling film or foil and chill. Serve in thick slices.

PER SERVING 508 kcals, protein 19g, carbs 49g, fat 27g, sat fat 6g, fibre 4g, sugar none, salt 2.09g

**Crab sandwiches**

MAKES 4 DEEP-FILLED SANDWICHES

• PREP 20 MINS • NO COOK **Easy**

8 hand-cut slices best-quality brown or granary bread

Unsalted butter, for spreading

1 lemon, cut into 4 wedges, to serve

FOR THE CRAB PASTE

170g can crabmeat

1 tbsp mayonnaise

1 tsp tomato ketchup

Juice ½ lemon

1 tsp Dijon mustard

Big pinch cayenne pepper

FOR THE TOPPING

170g can white crabmeat

Handful chopped mixed herbs, such as parsley, dill, tarragon, chervil, chives

Juice ½ lemon

2 tbsp olive oil

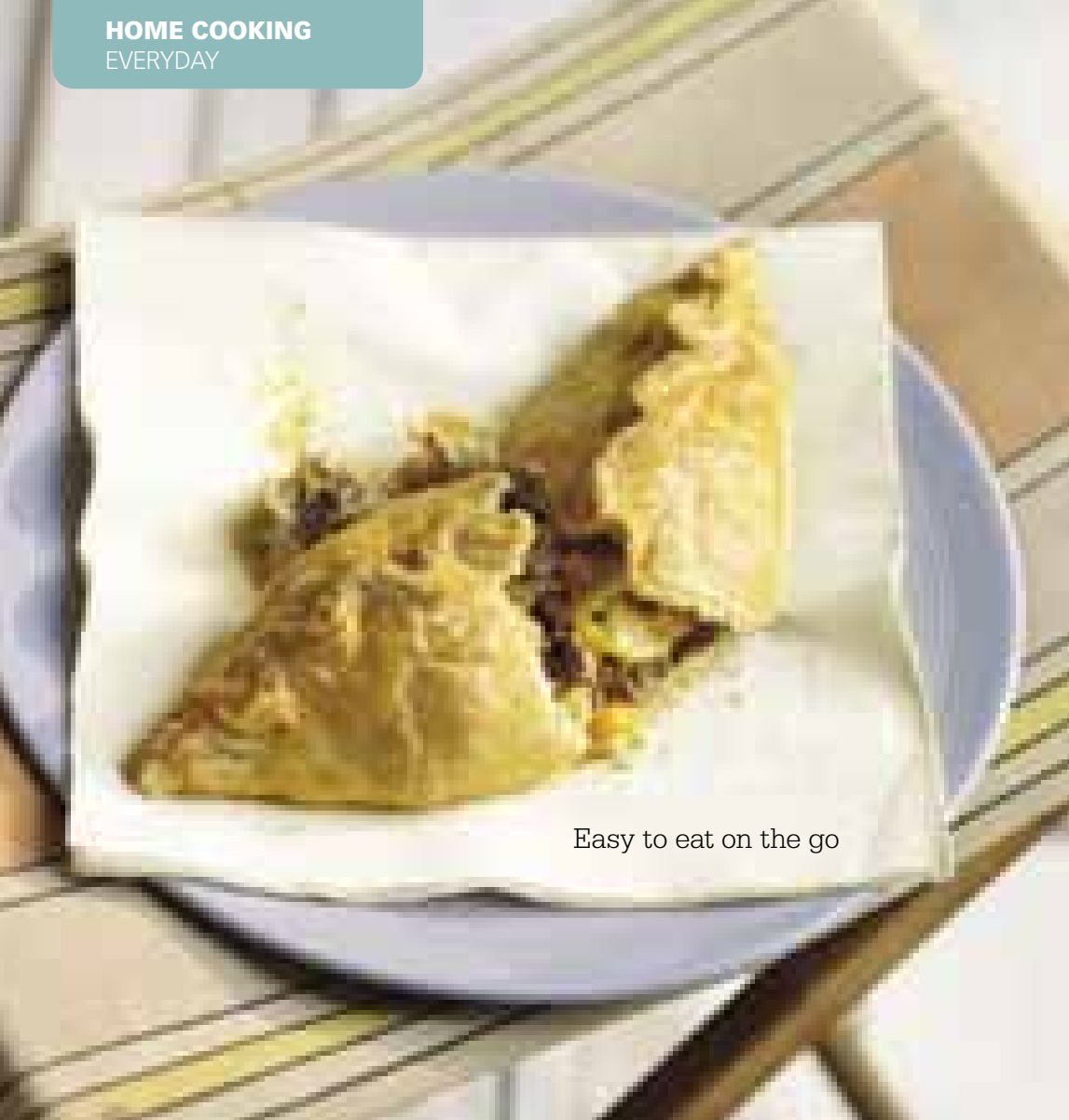
Lemon wedges, to serve

1 To make the crab paste, mix all the ingredients together in a bowl and season, then set aside. In a separate bowl, mix the crabmeat with the herbs, lemon juice, oil and seasoning.

2 Spread the bread lightly with butter, then spoon and spread the crab paste over 4 of the slices. Pile the white meat over, then top with the remaining bread.

3 Cut the crusts off, if you like, and serve halved, or in small triangles or squares with lemon wedges on the side.

PER SANDWICH 529 kcals, protein 30g, carbs 41g, fat 28g, sat fat 9g, fibre 3g, sugar 3g, salt 2.65g



Easy to eat on the go

Cornish pasties

MAKES 4 • PREP 25 MINS PLUS CHILLING

• COOK 55 MINS **A little effort**

FOR THE PASTRY

125g butter, chilled and diced

125g lard, diced

500g plain flour, plus extra

1 egg, beaten, to seal and glaze

FOR THE FILLING

350g beef skirt or chuck steak, finely chopped

1 large onion, finely chopped

2 medium potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced

175g swede, peeled, finely diced

1 tbsp freshly ground black pepper

1 Rub the butter and lard into the flour with a pinch of salt using your fingertips or a food processor, then blend in 6 tbsp cold water to make a

firm dough. Cut equally into 4, then chill for 20 mins.

2 Heat oven to 220C/200C fan. Mix together the filling ingredients with 1 tsp salt. Roll out each piece of dough on a lightly floured surface until large enough to make a round about 23cm across – use a plate to trim it to shape.

3 Firmly pack a quarter of the filling along the centre of each round, leaving a margin at each end. Brush the pastry all the way round the edge with beaten egg, carefully draw up both sides so that they meet at the top, then pinch them together to seal. Lift onto a non-stick baking tray and brush with the remaining egg to glaze. Bake for 10 mins, then lower oven to 180C/160C fan and cook for 45 mins more until golden.

PER PASTY 1,174 kJ, protein 34g, carbs 114g, fat 68g, sat fat 35g, fibre 6g, sugar 7g, salt 1.96g



Corn, cheese & chilli empanadas

MAKES 8 MINI EMPANADAS • PREP 25 MINS PLUS CHILLING • COOK 20 MINS

Easy

½ x 198g can sweetcorn, drained well
Small handful coriander, leaves and stalks chopped

1 spring onion, finely sliced

25g extra mature cheddar, grated

½ green chilli, chopped

230g sheet ready-rolled all-butter shortcrust pastry

1 egg, beaten

2 tbsp sesame seeds

1 Make the filling by mixing the corn, coriander, spring onion, cheese and chilli with some seasoning. Unroll the pastry sheet, roll a little thinner with a rolling pin, then use a 10cm circle cutter to cut out circles of pastry. (You should get 6 circles, then re-roll the trimmings for 2 more.)

2 Brush the edges of the circles with a little of the beaten egg, then spoon a couple of teaspoonfuls of filling mixture onto each. Fold over one half of the pastry, and seal by pinching the edge with your fingers, until you have 8 small pasty-shaped empanadas. Arrange on a baking parchment lined baking sheet, brush with the rest of the egg and scatter with sesame seeds. Cover and chill for at least 30 mins before baking.

3 To cook, heat oven to 200C/180C fan and bake for 20 mins until golden and crisp.

PER SERVING 181 kJ, protein 5g, carbs 14g, fat 12g, sat fat 6g, fibre 1g, sugar 1g, salt 0.30g



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John's big cookout

Aussie chef and TV presenter John Torode shares his best salads, meat, fish and vegetarian options for you to mix and match on the barbie this season.

Photographs DEBI TRELOAR

TRY OUR
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Barbecues are a great excuse for a get-together. My mix-and-match recipes give you freedom to devise your own menu – but will go together perfectly if you're feeding a large crowd.

Easy spicy marinade



Lemon & garlic chicken

SERVES 6 GENEROUSLY • PREP 10 MINS PLUS AT LEAST 3 HRS

MARINATING • COOK 20 MINS **Easy** 

Grilled chicken is a real crowd-pleaser, especially when it's packed with flavour like this. The combination of chicken and garlic is a classic and, with the addition of a squeeze of lemon, wow – it really comes alive! But don't forget the salt – it enhances the flavour and helps the skin turn beautifully crisp.

10 garlic cloves

2 long red chillis, deseeded and chopped

3 lemons, two sliced into thin wedges, the other cut into six wedges, to serve

100ml olive oil, plus extra to serve

1 small bunch flat-leaf parsley, chopped, plus extra sprigs to serve

2 large, free-range, organic chickens, spatchcocked (see Know-how, above right) or, just use 4 thighs, 4 legs, 4 wings and 4 breasts

1 Peel the garlic and crush in a mortar and pestle along with the red chillis, but keep the mixture chunky. Mix the thin lemon wedges with the garlic and chilli, then add the oil and parsley. Place the chicken in a large container, rub in the marinade, then chill for 3 hrs or overnight.

2 Heat the barbecue or a griddle pan. If using spatchcocked chickens, place each, skin-side down, over the heat and leave to really char – about 10 mins. Turn and cook for 10 mins more. Turn twice more, cooking 2 mins more on each side each time until cooked through. Cut into portions. If using chicken pieces, simply barbecue or griddle for 10 mins on each side.

3 To serve, place on a serving plate, dress with a little olive oil and garnish with lemon wedges and a sprig of parsley.

PER SERVING 482 kcalories, protein 44g, carbohydrate 1g, fat 34g, saturated fat 10g, fibre none, sugar 1g, salt 0.49g

◆KNOWHOW

Spatchcocking is a brilliant way to cook chicken on the barbecue, keeping it whole and juicy, but taking less time to cook. To check that your chicken is ready, pierce the thickest part with a skewer – the juices should run clear.

Saffron salmon with tomatoes & lemon

SERVES 6 • PREP 10 MINS PLUS 10 MINS STANDING • COOK 15 MINS

Easy  **Superhealthy** **Heart healthy** **Omega-3** 

Cooking in foil is clean and simple. It allows you to sit back, knowing everything is being cooked all at once in one container, and the fish doesn't get stuck on the barbecue bars. These parcels can be made up the day before and the salmon itself is just as good cold with some lettuce and mayo.

20 baby plum tomatoes, halved

Pinch saffron

6 salmon fillets, about 140g/5oz each

6 tbsp olive oil

6 tbsp white wine

Zest and juice 2 lemons

1 Heat barbecue or oven to 200C/180C fan and cut 6 pieces of foil

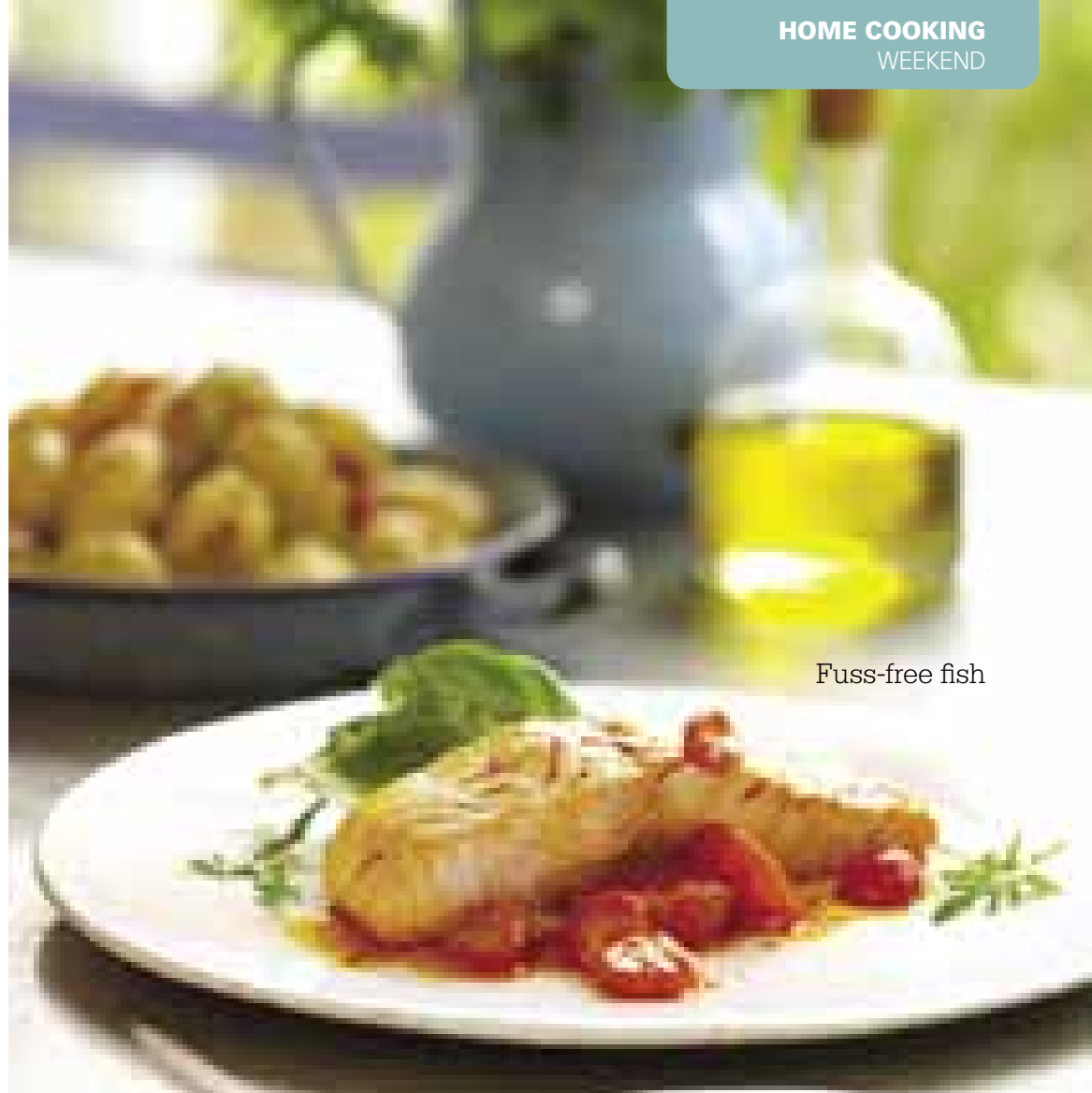
about 30cm square. Curl up the edges of the foil so the juices don't run out later on. Season the tomatoes well with salt and pepper, divide between the foil squares, then crumble the saffron over.

2 Place a portion of salmon on top of the tomatoes, then add 1 tbsp oil and 1 tbsp wine. Sprinkle with a little of the lemon zest, splash over a little lemon juice, then season generously. Pick up the opposite corners of the foil, then roll over and seal well, as if wrapping a present. Repeat with all 6 pieces of fish, then set aside for a good 10 mins to allow the saffron flavours to infuse the fish.

3 Place the salmon parcels onto the barbecue or in the oven on a baking tray for 15 mins, then open and serve.

PER SERVING 362 kcalories, protein 29g, carbohydrate 2g, fat 27g, saturated fat 5g, fibre 1g, sugar 2g, salt 0.19g


Fuss-free fish



Punchy Moroccan flavours



Harissa-marinated lamb

SERVES 6 • PREP 10 MINS PLUS AT LEAST 1 HR MARINATING • COOK 30 MINS **Easy** 

The smell of this lamb alone is evocative enough to take you to exotic Morocco – the big hunks of meat become well charred on the outside, but remain moist and pink in the middle. Once cooked, the rack cuts into individual chops that can be handed around with a napkin and the delicious harissa dressing.

3 x 6-bone racks of lamb, French-trimmed
100ml harissa (see recipe below)
400g natural yoghurt
Good bunch rosemary, leaves stripped
Small bunch mint, leaves chopped

1 Using a sharp knife, score the fat of the lamb in a criss-cross pattern, then put into a large bowl. Mix together the harissa and yogurt, then rub half all over the lamb. Tip in the rosemary, give it a mix, then marinate overnight or for at least 1 hr.
2 Heat the barbecue or grill. Scrape most of the marinade from the lamb; then, if barbecuing, place the racks on the heat, fat-side down. Do not move until they start to

flame. Once the flames start to lick the racks, turn over and cook for a good 6-8 mins more. Turn again and repeat the process twice. If grilling, grill fat-side up first for 15 mins, then turn and grill 15 mins more.

3 Meanwhile, stir the mint leaves into the remaining harissa and yoghurt mix, then season to taste. Once the meat is ready, leave to rest for 10 mins, then carve into individual cutlets. Serve with the harissa dressing.

PER SERVING 306 kcalories, protein 18g, carbohydrate 5g, fat 24g, saturated fat 11g, fibre none, sugar 4g, salt 0.26g

Homemade harissa

MAKES 200ML • PREP 10 MINS • COOK 5 MINS **Easy** 

Deseed and roughly chop **3 long red chillies**, then fry with **6 sliced garlic cloves** in a little oil until softened. Add **2 tsp smoked paprika** and **1 tsp ground cumin**, then fry for another min. Cool, then put into a food processor and whizz with **100ml olive oil**, **juice 2 limes**, **2 good handfuls coriander**, **2 good handfuls flat-leaf parsley** and **a handful mint**.



Roast squash, asparagus & goat's cheese salad

SERVES 6 EASILY HALVED • PREP 20 MINS • COOK 40 MINS **Easy**   

1 large or 2 smaller butternut squash, peeled and cut into chunky wedges
6 medium red onions, quartered (leaving the roots intact)
3 tbsp olive oil
20 asparagus spears
2-3 oregano sprigs, leaves stripped
50g toasted pine nuts
200g crumbly goat's cheese
FOR THE DRESSING (makes 400ml)
1 tbsp Dijon mustard
5 tbsp red wine vinegar
1 tsp walnut oil
300ml extra virgin olive oil

1 For the dressing, put the mustard and vinegar in a bowl and whisk until blended. Slowly add the walnut and olive oils, still whisking, then season with salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste. (This will keep for up to 1 week in an airtight jar.)

2 Heat barbecue or oven to 200C/180C fan. Place the squash wedges and onions in a bowl, then pour over most of the oil. In a separate bowl, toss the asparagus spears in the remaining oil. Season both well with sea salt and ground black pepper. Barbecue the squash and onions for 30 mins until softened and charred, or roast in a large roasting tin on the top shelf of the oven for a little longer. Test the onions are soft, then leave to cool. Meanwhile, barbecue or roast the asparagus for 5-10 mins, depending on their thickness, until tender and charred.

3 Cut the asparagus spears into 3 similar-size lengths, then drop into a large serving bowl with the squash, onions, oregano, pine nuts and goat's cheese. Spoon over 3 tbsp of the dressing and mix gently and thoroughly.

PER SERVING 329 kcalories, protein 11g, carbohydrate 22g, fat 23g, saturated fat 6g, fibre 5g, sugar 14g, salt 0.46g

Pea, rocket & pecorino salad

SERVES 6 AS A SIDE DISH ● PREP 5 MINS ●

COOK 4 MINS **Easy**   **Superhealthy** 

Sweet peas and broad beans from the shell, along with the peppery spiciness of the rocket, make this salad a true Italian explosion of flavour. What softens the salad is the cheese. Pecorino is a semi-hard ewe's milk cheese, which takes about 12 months to mature. If you can't get pecorino, use some Parmesan. I sometimes make this salad with fresh ricotta, too.

200g fresh broad beans (about 500g, weight in the pod)

200g fresh or frozen peas

Olive oil, for drizzling

150g bag wild rocket

Handful mint leaves

Balsamic vinegar, for drizzling

100g Pecorino or similar cheese, shaved with a peeler

1 Pod the beans and squeeze them from their shells, then keep to one side. Later in the season you may need to blanch these in boiling water. Mix with the peas and a good drizzle of olive oil, then season with salt and pepper. Wash the rocket well, pick out any leaves that look a bit wilted, then toss in a serving bowl with the mint.

2 Add the beans and peas to the serving bowl and toss everything together. Drizzle with a little more olive oil, then a little balsamic, and top with generous cheese shavings and a good grind of pepper.

PER SERVING 148 kcalories, protein 11g, carbohydrate 6g, fat 9g, saturated fat 4g, fibre 4g, sugar 2g, salt 0.33g

Jersey Royal salad with bacon & mustard dressing

SERVES 6 AS A SIDE DISH ● PREP 5 MINS ●

COOK 20-25 MINS **Easy**   

1.25kg Jersey Royal potatoes

10 rashers streaky bacon (I love Gloucester Old Spot)

2 tbsp wholegrain mustard

1 tsp white wine vinegar

2 tsp groundnut oil

200ml single cream

½ bunch chives, snipped



John's
couscous

Jersey
Royal salad
with bacon
& mustard
dressing

Pea, rocket &
pecorino salad

1 Boil the potatoes for 15 mins or until tender, keeping the skins on. Cool slightly under running water, then drain. Grill the bacon until crisp and reserve the cooking fat.

2 Mix the mustard, vinegar and the oil together in a bowl. Add the reserved bacon fat, whisk well to combine, then fold in the cream and seasoning. Add the chives and still-warm potatoes, then toss together. Spoon into a serving bowl and crumble over the bacon.

PER SERVING 309 kcalories, protein 10g, carbohydrate 35g, fat 16g, saturated fat 7g, fibre 2g, sugar 4g, salt 1.25g

John's couscous

SERVES 6 AS A SIDE DISH ● PREP 5 MINS

PLUS STANDING ● COOK 5 MINS

Easy  

500g couscous

50g butter

100g raisins

400ml hot vegetable stock

6 tbsp olive oil

2 tsp ground cumin

1 tsp paprika

1-2 long red chillies, deseeded and finely chopped

Bunch coriander, leaves chopped

Bunch mint, leaves chopped

Juice 2 limes

1 Place the couscous, butter, raisins and a good pinch of salt in a heatproof bowl, then pour over the stock. Cover tightly with cling film and leave to stand for 10 mins.

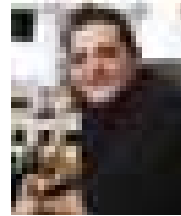
2 Meanwhile, heat the olive oil in a solid-based frying pan and add the cumin and paprika. Stir and cook for 2-3 mins until the spices become fragrant and start to change colour. Add the chopped chilli, then place to one side to cool. Uncover the cling film, fluff up the couscous with a fork, then stir in the spices, herbs and lime juice. Season to taste.

PER SERVING 408 kcalories, protein 6g, carbohydrate 56g, fat 19g, saturated fat 6g, fibre 1g, sugar 13g, salt 0.25g **GF**

Grandma's cooking secrets

Italian food is definitely one of the most heartwarming and flavourful, especially when it's straight from a traditional, rustic kitchen. **Ciro Piedimonte**, new specialty chef at Amalfi, Le Royal Meridien Abu Dhabi gives us a taste of his grandma's cooking.

Photographs **CRIS MEJORADA**



Ciro Piedimonte began cooking during his schooldays, in his hometown Naples, by helping out his

grandma in her cosy family-style restaurant. The Italian dishes that he has included in the new menu at Amalfi restaurant, were inspired by his grandmother and the foods she loved. "She is my biggest inspiration, so I decided to include some of her favourites in the menu, but gave each dish a little twist in terms of presentation, keeping all the ingredients the same," **Ciro** says.

Beef carpaccio with artichoke and Scamorza cheese

SERVES 4

500g fillet of beef tenderloin
36 thin slices of Scamorza cheese
(smoked mozzarella)
8 pc grilled artichoke
4 cloves of garlic
3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
Salt and pepper, to taste

1 Wrap the beef in clingfilm and freeze for 4 hrs. Then take it out and slice it into paper thin slices. Place on a plate and season with 1 tbsp of oil, salt and pepper.

2 Sauté the artichokes in the remaining olive oil and garlic. Arrange on top of the beef, in the centre of the plate. Add the scamorza cheese on top and serve.



Fillet of seabass with prawns in saffron sauce and lentils

4 filets of seabass
4 pcs tiger shrimp
2 cups of cooking cream
2 tsp of saffron
360ml of fish stock
3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
360g of brown lentils
Salt and pepper, to taste

1 Lay the fillets of sea bass on a chopping board, skin side up, and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Roll them up and secure with cocktail sticks or skewers. Place the shrimp on top of the roll and bake in oven at 180C for 12mins.

2 In a small pot, add the cream, saffron, salt and pepper to the fish stock and let it boil.

3 Sauté the lentils with extra virgin olive oil for a few mins until it is a bit tender, then add to the fish stock mixture. Cook on low heat for about 20 mins.

4 Spoon the saffron and lentil sauce on a plate, then place the baked seabass on top, with the prawn on the side. Serve immediately.




Ricotta mousse and poached pear

SERVES 4

4 pears, peeled
4 cinnamon sticks
1 star anise
8 tbsp ricotta cheese
250g sugar
8 pcs of thin chocolate squares
4 tbsp vanilla ice cream

1 Boil 250ml water with a sprinkle of sugar, then add the cinnamon stick and star anise. After a few minutes, add the whole peeled pear. Remove once it is cooked.

2 Mix ricotta cheese and sugar. Add the ricotta mix between two chocolate squares and squeeze gently so they stick together to make a sandwich.

3 To serve, place the pear on one side of a plate and the chocolate-ricotta sandwich next to it. Serve with vanilla ice cream. 



Learn to: Cook Steak



Richard Turner, head chef at London restaurant The Hawksmoor, shows how to make a perfect steak, step-by-step.

Recipe RICHARD TURNER Photographs DAVID MUNNS



Chargrilled steak with English lettuce and herb salad and anchovy butter

SERVES 2 • 30 MINUTES + CHILLING •

Easy

1 T-bone steak, about 3-4cm thick (800-900g in total) and at room temperature

Maldon smoked sea salt

Coarsely ground black pepper

ENGLISH LETTUCE AND HERB SALAD

1 tbsp cider vinegar

1 tsp wholegrain mustard

2 tbsp olive oil

1/2 English round lettuce, washed

2 tsp chives, chopped

2 tsp parsley, chopped

2 tsp mint, chopped

2 tsp shallots, chopped

2 tsp spring onions, chopped

ANCHOVY BUTTER

50g anchovy fillets in olive oil, drained

150g unsalted butter

1 tsp lemon juice

1 tsp Worcestershire sauce

1 To make the anchovy butter, blend all the ingredients with 1 tsp water in a small food processor until smooth (pass through a drum sieve if you want a finer finish). Roll in clingfilm and freeze until you need it.

2 Cook the steak following the step-by-step instructions, on facing page.

3 While the steak is resting, whisk the cider vinegar, mustard and olive oil to make a dressing. Toss the lettuce in the dressing with all the other salad ingredients. Serve with the steak and a slice of anchovy butter.

PER SERVING 1112 kJ, protein 66.2g, carbs 2.1g, fat 93.2g, sat fat 48.6g, fibre 0.9g, salt 3.64g

Richard Turner trained under the Roux brothers and worked with Marco Pierre White for five years, eventually as head chef at London's Quo Vadis. In 2006, he joined the Revive group as chef director, taking care of the menus at The Old Bear in Cobham, and The Albion in London. He also joined The Hawksmoor Spitalfields in 2009, then moved to The Hawksmoor Seven Dials on its opening in 2010 (thehawksmoor.co.uk).



1 Heat a griddle pan or BBQ really hot, so it's painful to hold your hand near. At the last minute season the meat generously. Don't use oil on the meat or in the pan – if the grill is hot enough the meat won't stick.



2 Put the steak on the hot griddle and leave it completely alone for 3 minutes. Don't try to move or prod it as it needs to sear completely on the bottom.



3 Check the steak after 3 minutes – it should come away easily from the griddle.



4 Don't turn the steak over but twist it by 90 degrees – cook for another 3 minutes, again don't be tempted to move or prod it.



5 Flip the steak over completely and repeat the same process on the other side. First 3 mins, then a 90 degree turn and another 3 mins. This will give you medium-rare steak. Cook for a little longer each side if you want it more well done.



6 Hold the steak fat side down with tongs until the fat becomes crisp and golden.



7 Take the steak off the griddle and rest on a warm plate for 10 minutes under a loose sheet of foil. This is a really important stage for the tenderness of the steak, so don't skip it.



8 Carve the two steaks from either side of the bone. Keep the bone for presentation if you like.



9 Carve the steaks into thick slices and serve with the salad and anchovy butter. [GF](#)

Light up your dinner table!

Whether you want to stick to the traditional, or try something different, these two festive Diwali menus from two of Dubai's leading Indian restaurants, are sure to impress. Photographs CRIS MEJORADA

* *Go traditional*



Chef Kuldeep Raturi, from Options By Sanjeev Kapoor, shows us how to prepare authentic

recipes which are typical of family feasts from his home state Uttarakhand in North India.



Palak anjeer kebab

SERVES 4

1kg spinach
100g figs, finely chopped
200g Bengal gram (chana dal)
50g clarified butter (ghee)
10g green chilly, finely chopped
50g khoya or ricotta cheese
10g ginger, finely chopped
5g coriander, finely chopped
5g garam masala
3g kasoori methi powder
Salt to taste

1 Soak chana dal for 1 hr and boil along with garam masala. Once the dal is half done, drain and set aside.

2 Blanch the spinach, drain and let it cool. Squeeze with the help of a muslin cloth.

3 In a pot, heat 30g ghee, add the chopped ginger, chopped green chilli, kasoori methi powder and chana dal. Stir for 5 mins.

4 Add the spinach and stir till it's dry, then add the chopped coriander. Remove from the heat and make the mixture. Set aside.

5 In a bowl, mix the khoya and figs. Make 10 equal size patties of the spinach and dal mixture, adding a little of the khoya and fig mixture in the centre of each, to make a stuffing, and then moulding to cover the mixture completely.

6 In a non-stick pan, heat the remaining ghee and fry the patties till golden brown.

Dahi wali bharwan bhindi

SERVES 4

500g tender lady finger (okra or bhindi)

5g cumin seeds

2 pcs green chilli, slit in half

5 cloves of garlic, finely chopped

2 inch pc ginger, finely chopped

2 large onions, finely sliced

2 big size tomatoes

5g turmeric powder

5g red chilli powder

10g coriander powder

40g clarified butter (ghee)

80g yoghurt

Salt to taste

Lemon juice of one lemon

Oil for frying

Coriander, finely chopped, for garnishing

1 pinch chaat masala

FOR THE STUFFING

50g roasted chana dal powder (Bengal gram)

1 pinch salt

50g amchur powder (dried mango powder)

10g ghee

1 Wash and dry the okra. Trim the top and ends and make a slit in the center for stuffing.

2 Combine the roasted channa powder, amchur powder, salt and ghee and stuff the okras. Drizzle a kadai (or wok) with some oil. Place on high heat, add the stuffed okras and constantly keep stirring for about 6 to 7 mins till they are browned. Remove from heat and set aside.

3 Heat the ghee in a different kadai, add cumin seeds and let them crackle. Add the ginger, garlic and green chilies. Sauté for a few seconds. Add the sliced onions and sauté till transparent. Add the coriander powder, turmeric and red chili powder. Mix well.

4 Add the tomatoes and salt, combine and cook, covered, for 5 to 7 mins on medium heat (keep stirring in between, so it doesn't stick).

5 Add the slightly cooked stuffed okras and cook on medium heat for 4-5 mins (uncovered). Now, on high heat, keep stirring and cook till the okras are soft and done (approx. 8-10 mins).

6 Adjust the salt and chaat masala. Add the lemon juice and mix in the yoghurt. Garnish with fresh coriander leaves and serve with hot rotis or rice.

Kaju pista roll

SERVES 4

200g kaju powder (cashew nut powder)

150g sugar

100g pistachio powder

Saffron for decoration

Chandi wark decoration (sold at Indian food stores)

1 Mix 2 to 3 cups water with 100g of the sugar, heat and prepare a syrup of medium-thick consistency.

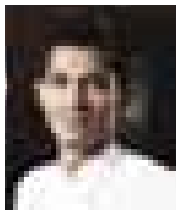
2 Add kaju powder and mix well on a low flame till it thickens slightly. Set aside to cool a little. Do the same for the pista mix.

3 Mould the kaju mixture into small balls (a little less than the size of your palm). Then make balls out of the pista mixture, about 1/3 size of the kaju balls, and shape them into cylindrical rolls. Set aside.

4 Flatten the kaju balls and using your hands, cover the pistachio cylinders with the kaju mixture. Make a proper shape, by rolling with little palm pressure on rolling board so that the pistachio mixture is completely covered. Decorate with chandi wark and saffron, and serve chilled.



* Go contemporary



Chef Asif Khan from Mahec, Le Meridien Dubai, started his

career cooking Indian cuisine at Indego by Vineet and Armani Amal, before joining Mahec, a restaurant known for its Indian-with-a-twist menu.

Assorted samosas with dhokla chutney

SERVES 4

12 to 15 samosa sheets
(available at all supermarkets)

FOR CARROT AND PEANUT SAMOSA

125g carrot, grated
2 tbsp oil
10 pcs peanuts
50g onion, chopped
75g boiled potato, chopped
1tsp mustard paste
Salt for taste

FOR SAGO & SWEET CORN SAMOSA

150g sago seeds, soaked
100g sweet corn, chopped
2g cumin seed

1tsp green chilli paste
2g coriander stems
2ml lemon juice
10 pcs cashew nuts, crushed
75g boiled potato, chopped
Salt for taste

FOR SPINACH AND CHEESE SAMOSA

200g spinach, blanched
50g paneer, grated
30g coconut, grated
1tsp clove powder
2ml lemon juice
Salt, to taste

FOR DHOKLA CHUTNEY

150g dhokla (a fermented chickpea cake, available in Indian stores)
5g sour cream
2g raw mango, grated

1 tsp sugar syrup
2g coriander, chopped

1 To make the dhokla chutney, mash the dhokla and mix well with all the ingredients – adding them in one at a time. Set aside.

2 To make the carrot and peanut stuffed samosa, heat oil in a pan and sauté the chopped onions. Then add the carrots and the rest of the ingredients.

3 Finish with chopped coriander and check the seasonings. Stuff the sheets and then make a triangular shape, making sure it is closed at all ends, and deep fry.

4 Repeat same method for all the stuffings. Serve hot with dhokla chutney on the side.





Zucchini bhuna

SERVES 4


3-4 cloves
1 tsp cumin seeds
4 pcs garlic
10 whole red chillies
4 pcs green cardamoms
2 inch cinnamon
500g green zucchini
500g yellow zucchini
2 tbsp mustard oil
1/2 cup yoghurt
1/2 cup coriander leaves, chopped
1 tsp turmeric powder
5 pcs medium sized onions
10 tomatoes
FOR THE ZUCCHINI FRIES
1 pc green zucchini
1 pc yellow zucchini
1/2 tsp chili powder
1/2 tsp turmeric powder
Salt, to taste
2 pcs of lemon
30g flour
1/4 tsp white pepper powder

1 To make the fries, cut zucchini into 3-inch sticks. Marinate with chili powder, turmeric powder, white pepper powder, salt and lemon juice. Place the seasoned flour on a plate, and dip zucchini sticks into it, before deep frying.
2 Remove once they turn golden, place on a kitchen towel and set aside.
3 To make the bhuna, clean and wash the zucchini, cut into small cubes. In the meantime, soak red chillies in lukewarm water for 30 mins.
4 Grind the garlic, red chillies, cloves, green cardamoms, cinnamon and turmeric powder to a fine paste.
5 Heat oil in a kadhai, add cumin seeds. When they start to crackle, mix in the paste and stir fry on high heat.
6 When all the moisture has evaporated, beat yoghurt and mix in with a little water, and continue cooking on high flame heat. Stir fry till all the moisture has evaporated. Then slowly add the zucchini. Adjust salt and stir fry till the masala coats the zucchini.
7 Garnish with coriander leaves and serve with rice or roti, and zucchini fries on the side.

Shahi tukra

SERVES 4

15 bread slices, edges cut
2 tbsp ghee
325g cream
125g condensed milk
100g white chocolate
1 pod vanilla beans
100g orange juice reduction
50g raisins
30g pistachios, chopped

1 Trim the bread and shallow fry in ghee till light golden colour. Set aside.
2 Make a sauce with cream, condensed milk, white chocolate and vanilla beans, cook all ingredients on low heat till it becomes a thick sauce mixture.
3 In a saucepan, reduce the orange juice on a slow flame to make a smooth syrup. Add raisins and mix well.
4 Arrange the bread in 2 inch deep flat try, pour the thick sauce on top of bread and let the bread soak up completely. Sprinkle the pistachios and the orange and raisin syrup on top. Continue and make three layers.
5 Bake in an oven for 10mins at 120C and serve with the remaining white chocolate sauce and berries on the side. 



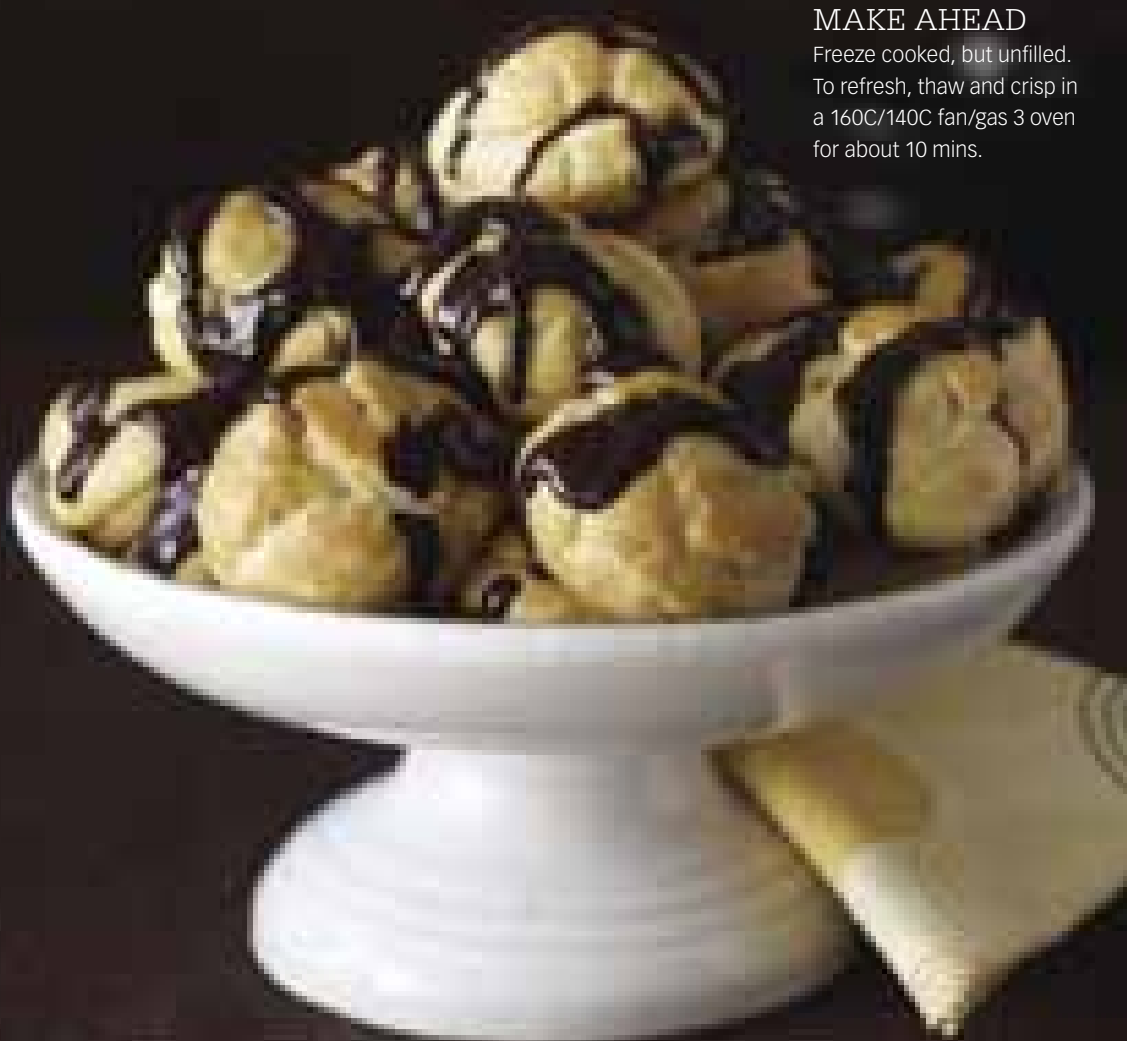
Something sweet

Forget store-bought sweets – this Diwali, impress guests and friends you visit, with the international flavours of these modern, homemade treats.



MAKE AHEAD

Freeze cooked, but unfilled.
To refresh, thaw and crisp in a 160C/140C fan/gas 3 oven for about 10 mins.



Moreish mocha profiteroles

SERVES 6 ● PREP 45 MINS ● COOK 30 MINS **A little effort** ❄️ UNFILLED

100g plain flour

85g unsalted butter

3 eggs, beaten

FOR THE FILLING

4 tbsp custard powder

6 tbsp golden caster sugar

600ml milk

2 tbsp coffee powder, dissolved in 2
tbsp hot water

284ml pot double cream

100g icing sugar

FOR THE SAUCE

100g dark chocolate, in pieces

50g butter

50ml coffee

1-2 tbsp coffee liqueur, such as Kahlúa
(optional)

1 Sift the flour into a bowl and stir in a pinch of salt. Put butter and 200ml cold water into a pan, bring to a rolling boil, then take off the heat. Tip in the flour and salt and stir to form a smooth paste. Now beat the mixture until it starts to come away from the sides of the pan, then tip onto a plate and leave to cool.

2 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Return paste to the pan, then gradually beat in the eggs, mixing well. Spoon walnut-sized balls onto a baking sheet, then bake for 20-25 mins until golden. Remove, poke the underneath with a teaspoon, turn upside-down, then bake for 5 mins to dry out. Cool on a wire rack before filling.

3 For the filling, mix the custard powder and sugar with a splash of milk to make a smooth paste. Heat remaining milk, then stir into the paste. Pour the mix into a pan and bring to the boil, stirring. Cook for 5 mins until you have a thick custard. Stir in coffee; leave to cool. Softly whip the cream, sift in the icing sugar and mix, then fold into the custard. Pipe into each choux bun.

4 For the sauce, melt chocolate and butter with the coffee in a bowl in the microwave on Medium for 1-2 mins. Add liqueur, mix well, then pour over the filled buns.

PER SERVING 807 kcs, protein 11g, carbs 73g, fat 54g, sat fat 31g, fibre 1g, sugar 51g, salt 0.63g



Pumpkin & ginger teabread

CUTS INTO 10 SLICES • PREP 25-30 MINS • COOK 50 MINS-1HR

A little effort ❄️

175g butter, melted
140g clear honey
1 large egg, beaten
250g pumpkin flesh, or butternut squash, coarsely grated
100g light muscovado sugar
350g self-raising flour
1 tbsp ground ginger
2 tbsp demerara sugar

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan. Butter and line the base and two long sides of a 1.5kg loaf tin with a strip of baking paper.
2 Mix butter, honey and egg and stir in pumpkin. Mix in sugar, flour and ginger. Pour into the tin and sprinkle with sugar. Bake for 50-60 mins, until risen and golden. Leave in the tin for 5 mins, then turn out and cool on a wire rack. Serve thickly sliced and buttered.

PER SERVING 351 kcals, protein 4g, carbs 52g, fat 15g, sat fat 9g, fibre 1g, sugar 24g, salt 0.69g

MAKE AHEAD

Teabread will keep in an airtight container for up to 1 week. To freeze for up to 1 month, wrap in cling film, then foil.



MAKE AHEAD

Will keep in an airtight container for up to 1 week. Or, open-freeze raw dough scoops on baking trays; when solid, pack into a freezer container, interleaving with baking parchment. Use within 3 months. Bake from frozen: 180C/160C fan for 15-20 mins.

Macadamia & cranberry American cookies

MAKES 55 SMALL COOKIES • PREP 20 MINS • COOK 12 MINS **Easy** ❄️

3 x 200g white chocolate bars, cubed
200g butter
2 eggs
100g light muscovado sugar
175g golden caster sugar
2 tsp vanilla extract
350g plain flour
2 tsp baking powder
1 tsp cinnamon
100g dried cranberries
100g macadamia nuts, chopped

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan. Melt 170g chocolate, then allow to cool. Beat in butter, eggs, sugars and vanilla, preferably with an electric hand whisk, until creamy. Stir in flour, baking powder, cinnamon and cranberries with two-thirds of the rest of the chocolate and nuts, to make a stiff dough.

2 Using a tablespoon measure or a small ice-cream scoop, drop small mounds onto a large baking tray, spacing them well apart, then poke in the rest of the chocolate, nuts and berries. Bake in batches for 12 mins until pale golden, leave to harden for 1-2 mins, then cool on a wire rack.

PER SERVING 149 kcals, protein 2g, carbs 18g, fat 8g, sat fat 4g, fibre none, sugar 13g, salt 0.14g **GF**



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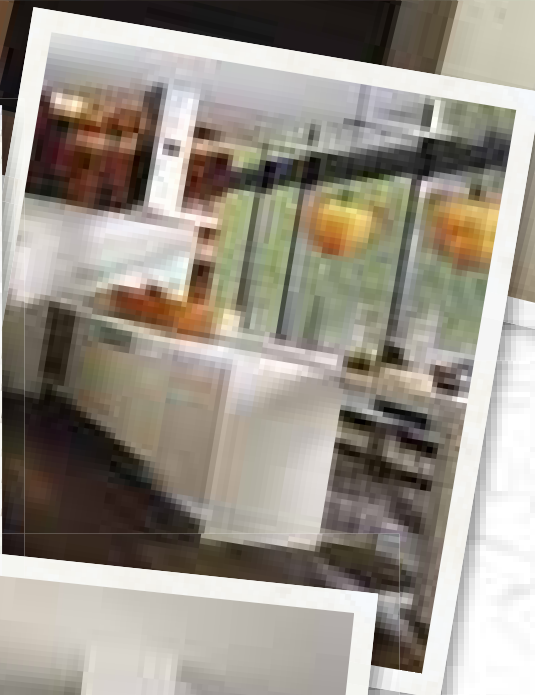
MIDDLE EAST

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IN THIS SECTION

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- * Trendy tableware, **P78**



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MY KITCHEN

Orlando Murrin, a former food editor, was lucky enough to inherit an elegant and efficient kitchen when he opened a bijou hotel in Somerset. He gives Vanessa Berridge a tour.

Orlando Murrin

Orlando Murrin edited BBC Good Food UK for six years until he left in 2004 to set up a hotel and gourmet restaurant in south-west France. He has since returned to England and to launch Langford Fivehead in Somerset, where Orlando serves country house-style menus to groups of two to 12 guests. The hotel has already won several accolades, including a Somerset new business award. Orlando has always been a keen cook – he was a MasterChef semi-finalist in 1992 – and has written several cookbooks, including *A Table in the Tam* (Harper Collins), based on his experiences in France.

What were you looking for in a kitchen?

We viewed more than 180 houses, both in this country and abroad, before we found Langford Fivehead. This house was just the right size and already had a good kitchen.

What do you like about the kitchen?

I had created three kitchens before coming here and this is by far the best. It's easy to cook in and I like the height, light, size and the super-deep granite work surfaces. Wooden floors have spring in them, so are less tiring than stone to stand on, all day.

What about the style?

It's high-end Mark Wilkinson with heavenly craftsmanship, so every drawer is a pleasure to open. There are lovely little hidden details, like built-in trays and bevelled drawers. We probably wouldn't have chosen a traditional-looking kitchen had we installed it ourselves, as our style is modern-technical.

How does the lighting work?

There are eight different lighting settings to suit every mood, although I like a strong light when I'm

preparing food and cooking. We're in the process of changing the old halogen downlights to LED lights, which save energy and cost less to run.

Any other details that you think are important?

There's a big double sink with a spray and waste-disposal unit, and a compost bin built into the wooden work surface.

What about storage?

There's plenty, and it's much more convenient to have more drawers and fewer overhead cupboards.

How do you use the kitchen?

I put items away as soon as I've finished using them (apart from the toaster and the kettle), to keep a clear space for working. Hotel guests eat breakfast in here sometimes, and occasionally on a Saturday morning I'll do a cookery demonstration. The

central island provides enough working space for me and our sous-chef, Sam.

As it's used professionally, did you have to make any changes?


'Health and safety' are not generally popular with small businesses, but we found our local Food Safety Officer 100 per cent helpful. She looked carefully at the kitchen and made a lot of useful suggestions about working practices – for instance, keeping a cleaning log and accident book, checking fridge temperatures, using plastic chopping boards and storing food in the right way.

Fortunately, nothing structural was needed, although we painted the walls and ceilings, and sanded and varnished the beams to freshen up the kitchen.

Anything you would have done differently?

The Aga is a nice, old-fashioned sort of cooker, and very convenient as it's always ready to go. But I think there's a lot to be said for an induction hob and a good wide modern electric oven. Some things, like choux pastry, are practically impossible to bake correctly if you can't see what is happening through glass.

Final thoughts?

Having inherited a luxurious, hand-built kitchen, I appreciate just how nice it is to work in. 

ORLANDO'S TIPS

- Think about how many people are likely to be working in your kitchen when you plan it.
- Don't skimp on the work surface, which gets hammered. Stone or Corian are best if you can afford them.
- Incorporate a microwave for heating and melting.
- Build in big rubbish bins – it's one less thing to fall over.
- Make sure you have power points everywhere.
- Keep your work surfaces as clear as possible for efficiency's sake.
- I buy cheap, non-stick frying pans from Ikea's 365 range. I think it's pointless to buy expensive ones, as the non-stick surfaces will go anyway.

Running a hotel means that Orlando has to be very organised. They like having a capacious cutlery drawer, with each section clearly marked



One of the great things Orlando has found about the Aga is that all the smells go up the flue, so there's no need for extractor fans



There are all sorts of hidden details in Orlando's kitchen, including a niche to tuck trays neatly away

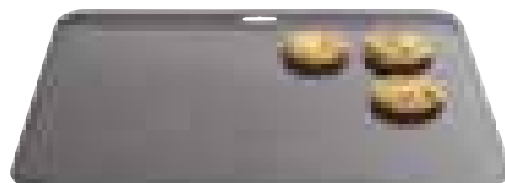
GET THE LOOK

Squeeze garlic, ginger and shallots with this mini Alligator cutter with in-built cleaning grid and collection box. Dhs148, from Harvest Home.



A kitchen timer is essential for professional-style cooking. This funky timer Dhs125 from Tavola, will brighten up any kitchen.

The Siemens water kettle has a steel filter and auto switch-off option. Dhs250, at Better Life.



This heavy duty My Kitchen Cook Bake baking sheet, Dhs89 from Lakeland, is non-stick, durable and long lasting.

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MY KITCHEN

Monica Galetti

The tough-talking New Zealander, a leading restaurant chef and BBC MasterChef judge, shows Val Wotton her new family kitchen.

Monica Galetti is Michel Roux Jr's senior sous chef at Le Gavroche, his stern fellow judge on BBC's MasterChef: The Professionals and married to his head sommelier, David. So, you would expect her to have a great kitchen.

But for two years, when she and David first moved into their south London house with young daughter Anais, the kitchen was terrible. It was very old, falling apart and so small, you couldn't have two people cooking in there. Building an extension was the solution.

Who designed your kitchen?

I did, so I have to admit to any flaws – but the only thing I would have done differently is increase storage space. I have so much stuff, I could do with more cupboards. Otherwise, it's perfect! We wanted a kitchen-diner, that would work as a family

room – with a four year-old, it's difficult cooking in a separate room – and as space to entertain.

I had thought of an island kitchen unit, but it was cheaper to buy a new dining table and I'm glad we did – this works really well.

What appliances did you want?

A dishwasher was top of the list: the old kitchen didn't have one.

A big fridge was essential and I wanted the combi-steam oven, which is quite a luxury but it's fantastic, and also a microwave – which surprises people, but it's very handy with a child.

A wine cellar was a must. David has his own cellar under the stairs where he keeps all the important stuff, but I wanted something easy to access when we're entertaining. So I have a wine cellar, too, and the coffee machine is his. Everything's brand new, even the washing

machine. It's all built-in and hidden – even the bins – for a clean, streamlined look.

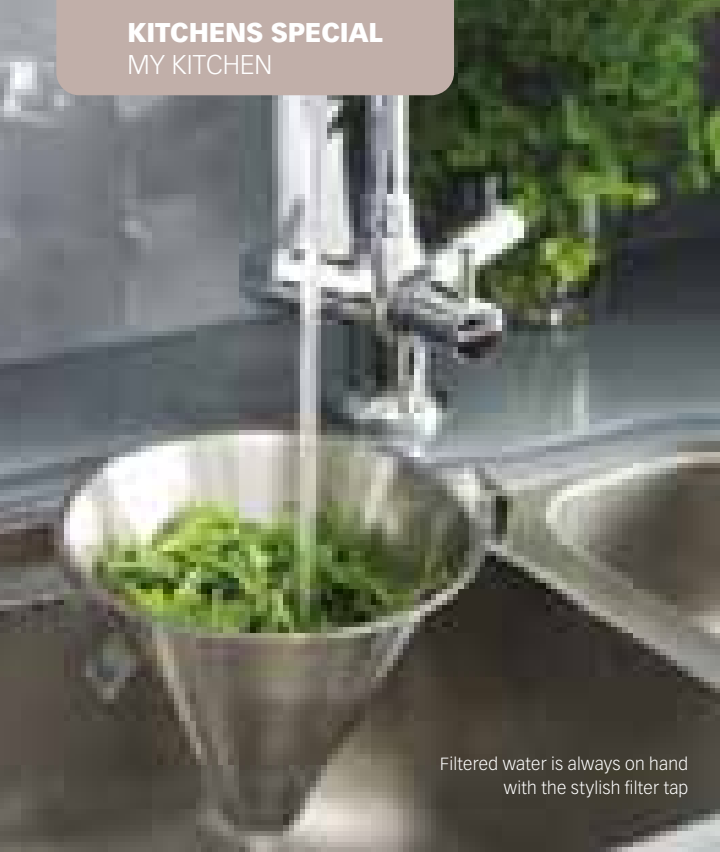
What else was important?

Light. As a chef, I love natural light – hence the skylight and glass doors and big windows in the extension. We have lights under and in the cupboards, and in the skirtings.

I knew I wanted a light-grey colour scheme, but the glass worktops and splashbacks were a last-minute decision, when we saw them on display. They were the most expensive thing in the kitchen, but I love the way they reflect the light, they're amazing and incredibly easy to clean.

How about storage?

The KitchenAid mixer is the only thing I keep out all the time, everything else has a home. The pull-out larder is brilliant – I leave it out while I'm cooking, so



Filtered water is always on hand with the stylish filter tap



The glass door, leading to the garden, adds lots of additional light

The pestle and mortar and hand blender are two of Monica's kitchen essentials



Rubbish can be swept from the worktop straight into the deep pull-out bin

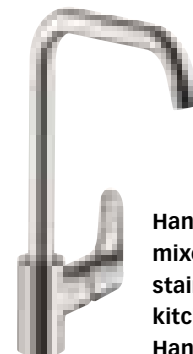


The glass door, leading to the garden, adds lots of additional light

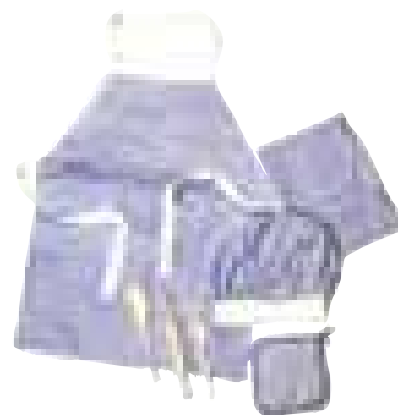
The pestle and mortar and hand blender are two of Monica's kitchen essentials

GET THE LOOK

The Moulinex slim force DM855 hand blender, Dhs349, takes up minimal space, but is packed with features including a potato grid for making mashed potatoes.



Hansgrohe's Focus kitchen mixer tap offers a sleek stainless steel finish to any kitchen sink. Dhs480, at Hansgrohe showrooms.



If your kids, like Monica's, love spending time in the kitchen, this Kids chef set – which includes an apron, chef's hat, tea-towel, potholder, plus mini rolling pin and beech wood cutlery – is perfect. Dhs128, from Harvest Home.



The German made Teka built-in steam oven is ideal for quick, healthy cooking Dhs5,880, at Teka showrooms.

I can reach for any oils and spices I'm using, then just close it and all's clear. Deep drawers for pans and china are great. I keep things you only use occasionally, like the toasted sandwich maker (Anais loves toasts), in the swing-out corner unit.

So no regrets?

None, I love my kitchen. It's a home kitchen that a professional can work in. It's quite a big space, but I can cook in one corner and be literally just a step away from everything I use. Everything works so well, from the filter tap to the bins. It's fantastic as a family room and for entertaining, it opens out to the garden. After three months with a makeshift kitchen in the sitting room, this is bliss. **GF**

MONICA'S TIPS

- Before going to a showroom, study friends' kitchens and the way they function.
- Make a list of all you want: what you'll use the room for, which items need storage space, and what appliances you really need.
- Go to a showroom and plan your kitchen in detail before any building work starts – then you'll know exactly where plumbing and wiring should go.
- With a large supplier, wait for the right price. Don't take the first quote you get – be prepared to walk away.

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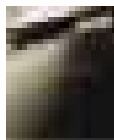
Magic Display
Magic LED panel



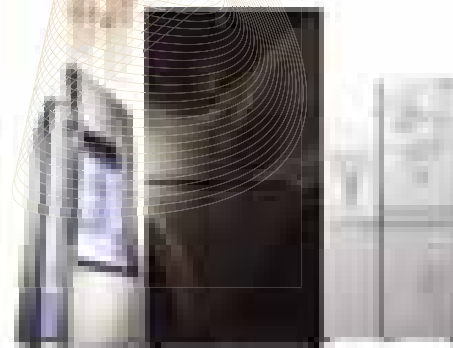
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MY KITCHEN

Private chef and cookbook author Maurizio Pelli shows us around the remodelled kitchen of his beautiful colonial-styled villa in the Lakes.

Maurizio Pelli

Maurizio Pelli moved to Dubai around 13 years ago from Lake Como in Italy – where he grew up – after he retired from his family textile business. Living in the Lakes with his fiancé, two cats and one adorable Maltese, Maurizio is a true Italian foodie at heart and has always had a passion for food. He now works as a private chef for dinners parties and is the author of *The Triumph of the World's False Italian Cuisine* (Dorrance Publishing). When he bought this house in 2008, he remodelled the kitchen by breaking down the walls and doors on all sides of the kitchen, in order to get more storage space and openness. We speak to Maurizio to find out more.

Why did you want to redo your kitchen?

The minute I saw it I knew it was too small, and did not have enough storage space, so the first thing I did – after I bought the house – was take down one door and two walls from both sides of

the kitchen, to make three entrances. This opened up the kitchen tremendously, making it look much bigger. I knew what I wanted to do design-wise, so I immediately started looking for suppliers to source products from. I needed a kitchen that was easy to access, had good lighting and made me feel comfortable while cooking.

Where did you get the inspiration from?

I travel a lot and have seen a lot of nice homes, so I wanted to re-create a country-style Spanish house. This look was achieved particularly with the tiles I have used not only in the kitchen, but also in the garden and patio. I had an image of what I wanted in my head, and went through a lot of different tile suppliers in the UAE, before I found one I liked, and asked them to import a particular artisanal handmade tile from Andalusia. I chose this print as it instantly brightens the kitchen, giving it a splash of colour, and is a great contrast to the white storage cabinets.



The vintage Indian cupboard was perfect for storing all the pasta varieties

Did you change the lighting in the kitchen?

I added spotlights all over the ceiling to make it brighter. The kitchen is the heart of the home, and my guests always relax and have a drink here, while I cook. So I wanted to give it a nice vibe and make it look comfortable and cosy. The lighting is also really helpful near the stove area, as I can see the counters surrounding it clearly.


What other modifications have you done?

I changed the counter top to a premium marble-top, which gives it a more luxurious feel. I also took down the door in front of the maid's room, added closets along the way – to make a walk-in-pantry on both sides, which has another fridge, and is used as a storage area. I don't have even one empty cabinet in my kitchen and try to use every space possible. I also made the granite kitchen table bigger and added a wooden countertop, as I wanted more space for guests to be able to relax here, and for us to have a nice meal.

What was the most important purchase you made for the kitchen?

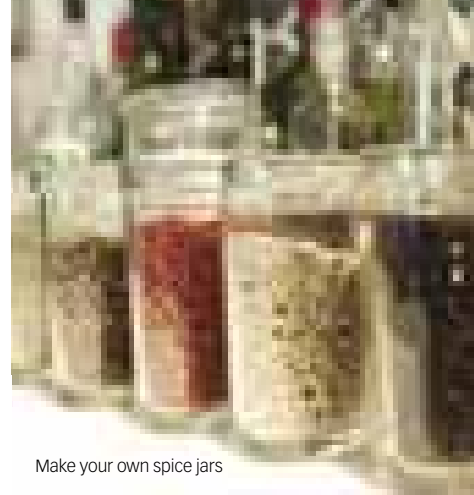
It was a gas stove – I had an electric one, and that was just not practical enough for me. The antique wooden Indian-style cabinet was a piece I had for a long time, but I wanted it in the kitchen – and so I use it as a pasta storage cabinet.

Is there anything else you would like to change or add?

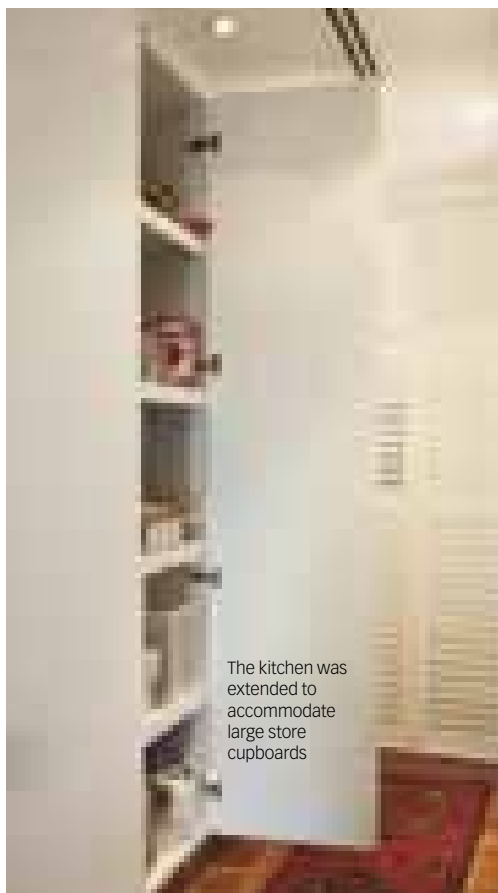
Well, I definitely want a bigger kitchen, but if I had to add anything, it would have to be a cellar for my wine collection, a cheese room and a place to hang meat – all against one big wall in the kitchen. 

MAURIZIO'S D-I-Y TIP

"I needed big transparent jars to put my spices in, but didn't want to use plastic ones. So I cleaned out old candle glass jars, and added a rubber seal to the inner lid that closes the jar – they are practical and look great too."



Make your own spice jars



The kitchen was extended to accommodate large store cupboards

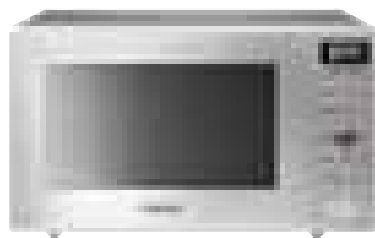


The Spanish tiles were flown in just for this kitchen



Maurizio made the kitchen table bigger as his kitchen is a social hotspot

GET THE LOOK

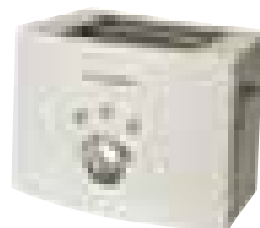


The stylish Panasonic GD692 Microwave oven, Dhs779 at Al-Futtaim Panatech, has a 1000W micro power and grill, with user-friendly pop-up dial buttons.



Maurizio stresses on the importance of using the right kind of utensils for good cooking. These Mauviel copper saucepans, from Dhs350 at Tavola, are perfect to go straight from stove-top to table.

This Hitachi HTOE10 toaster, Dhs79 from Eros, has a twin pop up bread section, as well as a slide out crumb tray.



A big fridge is essential for a chef. This Sharp dual swing door refrigerator (butterfly), Dhs3,599 at Cosmos, is roomy and stylish.



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MY KITCHEN

Marie Jordan



Dubai-based interior designer and *BBC Good Food ME* reader Marie Jordan loves cooking and entertaining at home. She redid her kitchen last year to make it lighter, brighter and roomier. She tells Nicola Monteath about the changes she made.



Marie's dog Caesar loves the black and white tile floor as much as she does!



The island is the main hub of this kitchen

Marie Jordan moved to Dubai around 11 years ago, to work as an interior designer, and has since called Dubai her second home. Originally from Sweden, Marie lives in Umm Suqueim 1, with her husband Nik, daughter Ninah and dog Caesar, in a villa that they have been renting since last year. Even though it's a rented home, that didn't stop her from investing in her kitchen, as she wanted a space she would enjoy cooking and spending time in. She tells us about the changes she made, and her design inspirations.

What was the thought process behind redesigning your kitchen?

My family and I live in this kitchen, we are here all the time and so I wanted it to reflect my personality and the things I like. When I first saw the house, I

felt it had a bit of a beach home vibe, which I wanted to run through into the kitchen as well. I also wanted the kitchen to somewhat resemble the one I have back home in Sweden. I got the whole kitchen setup from Ikea, adding accessories of my choice to decorate.

Describe what your kitchen initially looked like?

The kitchen was very dark and had a lot of metal with yellow storage cabinets. The backsplash had orange tiles, and there were walls surrounding the kitchen, giving it very closed up feel.

Did you have a theme for the design?

I like my kitchen to be zen, to make me feel calm and balanced. I wanted to make it clean and neat, but not have a minimalistic look. I've got knick knacks that add a homely touch. For

instance, I have an old pestle and mortar, which belongs to Nik's grandmother. My design sensibility has actually changed a lot after I had my daughter – it used to be a lot more minimal but now it's got a bit more character, it's warmer and cosier.

What was the first change you made?

I decided to break down the walls and bring down the ceiling, to give it more of an open, airy look. I also white-washed the walls, as I prefer a clean and fresh canvas to work on. The storage cabinets all around the kitchen were changed to pull-out drawers – with compartments in each drawer to keep everything organised inside. For the flooring, I decided to keep it simple and give it a black and white monochromatic look – I love chequered tiles.



Marie has had a water filter installed in her taps to ensure clean water while cooking



Convenient compartments in storage drawers make this an organised kitchen



All the cooking essentials are kept within easy reach



A desk drawer has found a new lease of life in the kitchen for storing odds and ends

MARIE'S TOP TIPS:

- Use big photo frames with a thick border as serving platters. If you're having a themed party, simply slip a relevant picture into the frame and serve canapés on them.
- Install a water filter in the kitchen sink – this way you can use chemical-free tap water to wash your fruit and vegetables.
- Transfer your dishwashing liquid into a soap dispenser, to keep the sink area looking neat and stylish.

How long did the remodelling take?

It took around two months to complete, as we had to knock down the walls and ceilings, and all the work was done with a contractor. We moved into the house last summer, and it took longer than I expected, as the pace of work was not as rapid as it usually is during other seasons.

What was your top priority, when it came to the design?

I needed everything to be functional and accessible; I work all around my kitchen, which is why I decided to make it U-shaped with an island in between – so that everything is within easy reach. The island is the focal point of the kitchen – I do a lot of chopping at the island, use it as the main area for canapé and nibble platters for dinner parties, and also use it to have a meal with my daughter Ninah, while she does her homework. I have all the things I frequently use for cooking, such as spices and oils, conveniently placed on a shelf near the stove.

I have also added dimmers, so that we can have a nice meal and simply relax in the kitchen in the evenings. Dim lighting is essential for dinner parties, and a lot of my parties end up being in or around the dinner area – as that is just where people end up lingering around most of the time. I also like to use candles in my kitchen, my favourite being those with a refreshing lemony fragrance.

Any interesting additions that you've made?

We bought a white desk, and it had a big drawer unit on top of it that was removable, which we had to take out as the table was a bit too high for the room it was in. So I decided to put it on my kitchen countertop, and use it as storage for cupcake liners, mats and baking accessories.

Are there any other changes you would still like to make?

I would definitely change the window, as it is very old and does not suit the kitchen, but I'm not allowed to, at the moment. **GF**

GET THE LOOK

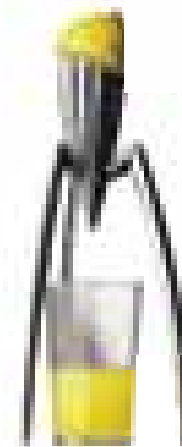


A chalkboard is a great way to share weekly menus, write up grocery lists, or simply share notes with family members, and it adds a homely touch to a kitchen. Talk Chalk board, Dhs99 at The One.

This Nespresso Pixie machine in electric indigo is as stylish as it is convenient for quick cups of delicious coffee. Dhs1,300, at Nespresso outlets.



Alessi's Juicy Salif citrus squeezer, Dhs320 from Tavola, looks great as an accessory on a kitchen counter and is perfect for freshly squeezed juices every morning.



A big oven was a must for Marie, given how often she entertains. The Indesit premium cooking range is Dhs2,699, at all leading outlets.





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Papandrea Arcadia Kitchen at KitchenKraft



Sofia Kitchen
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Classic

The inspiration: Country chic by Sofia at KitchenKraft

The trend: Vintage

The look: A traditional English country house vibe, with generous use of rich wood and natural materials, and a comfortable, lived-in look, makes this a timeless classic. Think retro-style intricately crafted woodwork in dark colours like walnut, accented with glass, and distressed shabby chic finishes.

Vinod Nair from KitchenKraft explains, "The Country Chic style brings out a classic and traditional look to any space. Since eclectic designs are in vogue, traditional and country looks with detailed woodwork, modern appliances and good storage space convey a lifestyle that is sophisticated, yet understated."

How to achieve it:

- * Granite or marble worktops are best for this look, combined with wooden cabinetry.
- * Choose appliances that are traditional looking, but still offer modern features – avoid anything too prominent in steel finish or metallics, opting for white instead.
- * Opt for a kitchen island, with a feature like a ceiling hanger for copper pots and pans.
- * The space needs to look busy, but not too cluttered – use vintage posters and art on the walls; create accents on the walls with a section of printed tiles; and keep a variety of things like fruit bowls, colourful mugs and bread bins on the counter, maintaining order amongst the chaos.

Perfect for: Families with young kids.

Top 3 kitchen design trends

Looking for a kitchen makeover? Choose a theme and plan the rest accordingly, to ensure harmony and balance in the design scheme. Here are three different trends to inspire. By Sudeshna Ghosh.

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pick

MUST-HAVE FOR A CLASSIC KITCHEN COUNTERTOP:

Kenwood's True collection offers an honest, simple, back-to-basics approach to kitchen gadgets that fit seamlessly into a traditional country house-style kitchen set-up. The True kettle is a compact unit that offers an ergonomic design and eco-friendly features.





Poggenpohl Plusmodo Kitchen
at Kitchens & Beyond

Contemporary

The inspiration: Modern minimalism by Modo+ Poggenpohl at Kitchens & Beyond

The trend: Metallic

The look: Clean lines, basic colours – white, black and grey – and sleek, state-of-the-art gadgetry are key features of this look. Low-key and classy, this style is the ultimate in European sophistication. Lots of steel and metallics are used, as are concealed and integrated appliances, to give a glamorous, barely-there vibe.

According to Mr Thomas Klee from Poggenpohl, open shelves with integrated lights are a highlight of this look. “This makes it easy to identify items that are stored there. Plus, everything – even the most simple object – looks like a decorative item with the light accentuating it,” he says. “It is a stylish and modern kitchen, but it is also still a practical kitchen, that you can use with ease.”

But, as he points out, this look is not for everyone. “Since we use a lot of open shelves in this kitchen, it can become a messy area - so you have to be disciplined to a certain degree.”

How to achieve it:

- * Countertops are best kept bare with a few items in bold colours strategically placed for dramatic effect.
 - * A combination of materials like natural stone (worktop), matte lacquer brown (doors) and natural holm oak veneer (pull-out trays & sliding doors) accentuate the stylishness of the kitchen.
 - * Niche lighting is important – it is a nearly natural quality light and you can see everything clearly on the work surface. It also works great as a ‘mood light’, creating a cosy atmosphere, when other lights in surrounding rooms are turned off.
- Perfect for:** Stylish couples living in a posh penthouse.

Product
pick

MUST-HAVE FOR A CONTEMPORARY KITCHEN COUNTERTOP:

The Kenwood Major Titanium Kitchen Machine is a versatile gadget that packs many functions into its sleek, stylish design, making it the perfect choice for a minimalist kitchen. With a powerful 1500W motor, large bowl capacity and over 20 attachments, it is the ultimate cook's companion.



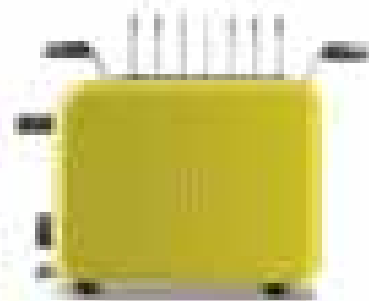


Delia Kitchen at KitchenKraft

Product
pick

**MUST-HAVE
FOR A COLOURFUL
KITCHEN COUNTERTOP:**

Kenwood's statement-making Kmix boutique collection is an easy way to add colour, brightness and fun to the kitchen. The Kmix toaster, available in five on-trend colours, is compact and practical, offering the ultimate toasting control with the Peek and View function, and Variable browning dial.



Colourful

The inspiration: Delia kitchens by KitchenKraft

The trend: Colour blocking

The look: Recent years have seen trends in kitchen design steering away from the neutral colour schemes that have historically been popular, to using more colours to add brightness and energy. The idea is to punctuate a light wood-coloured or white space with unexpected pops of bright colours – which can be anything from summery lime green to dramatic red, and everything in between. “It energises the working space and makes it more fun and interesting,” explains Nair. “It reflects a flair for experimenting, and depicts the homeowner’s real personality.”

The color pop is a trend that works best in a spacious, modern kitchen where clean lines abound – and a dash of color lifts up the space. However, it can also be adapted to more conventional kitchens, as long as neutral colours dominate, and the

accent colours are bright and complement each other.

The colour pop trend is best suited for open kitchens, however, allowing for a cohesive theme to be followed in the whole home. “As we see the trend for open kitchens prevailing in most of the modern spaces, it gives an opportunity to have a theme that can be followed through the entire living space such as lounge and living spaces,” Nair adds.

How to achieve it:

* The colour can be achieved either with painting a whole wall – if it is available – or sections of the cabinetry and drawers.

* Materials like Quartz and Corian would make an ideal choice for work surfaces in a colour blocked kitchen.

* Add additional pops of colour with bright accessories such as kettles, toasters, coffee machines, or simply a colourful tea towel.

Perfect for: Young, trendy and creative types. 



Mobalpa Kiffa Kitchen at KitchenKraft

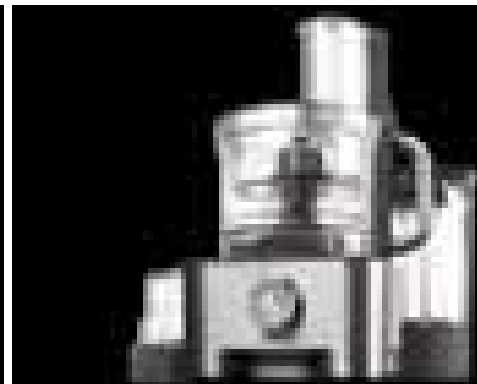
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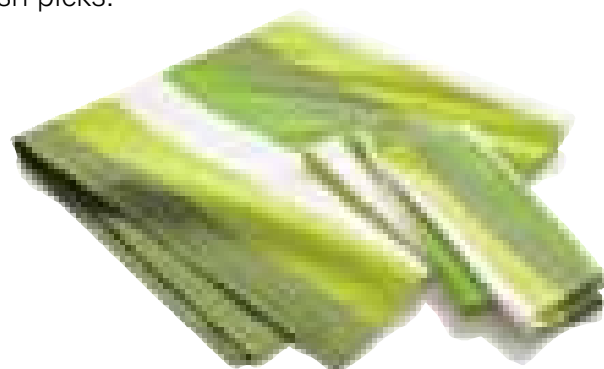
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Table couture

Dress up your dining table with these stylish picks.



Glass bowl stand, Dhs375, at
MARINA HOME INTERIORS



Green striped tablecloth
and table mats, Dhs59
and Dhs119 (set of 6), at
CRATE AND BARREL



Blizz 55pcs dinner set, Dhs550,
at **HOME CENTRE**



Round metal plate,
Dhs35, at **HOMES R US**



Fully gilded dinner fork from the
Jardin d'Eden collection, Dhs1,100,
at **TANAGRA**



Glass bar jar, Dhs595,
at **2XL FURNITURE**



Michael Aram Black orchid
napkin rings, Dhs225, at
HARVEY NICHOLS DUBAI



Iron gold serving dish, Dhs89, at
INDIGO LIVING



Round casserole 26cm Laurel S/S Knob
Le Crueset, Dhs1,280, at **TAVOLA**

SHARP



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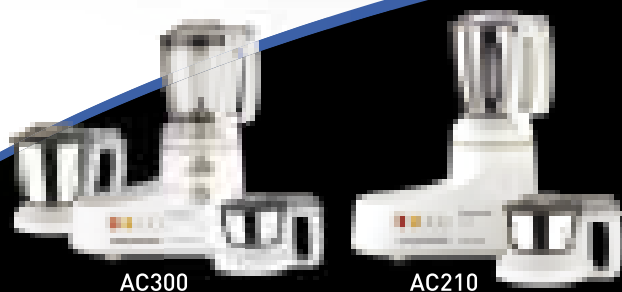


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AC300

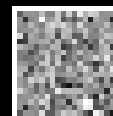
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Gourmet Lifestyle

Travel, global cuisines, health, interviews, kitchens and more



IN THIS SECTION

- * Indian celebrity Atul Kochhar unveils his soon-to-open Dubai restaurant, **P84**
- * Discover Danish cuisine, **P88**
- * Three essential Sydney culinary experiences, **P96**
- * Paris on a budget, **P98**



Open up a steakhouse menu, and you'll probably be overwhelmed by the amount of choice offered and terms used, to describe a piece of steak. Or, even when you're out shopping for your next barbecue, the variety of cuts and types of meat available are likely to be confusing. Help is at hand with Gracious Sikhosana, South African meat expert from The Meat Co. restaurants, who takes us through the meat minefield so you know exactly what to choose, whether it's for the bbq or at a restaurant.

THE BREED

There are over 800 breeds of cattle worldwide. However the most popular ones, on every meat lover's tongue, are usually the premium breeds such as Wagyu or Angus.

Angus This type of cattle matures at the tender age of two, and is used for consumption when they are either two or three years old, as the more they mature, the stronger the muscles get – making the meat tougher. Angus is only used for beef consumption and not for its milk, and is a top quality meat choice at restaurants all over the world.

Wagyu Known to be higher in quality than the Angus, Wagyu cattle are of Japanese origin and have a higher percentage of marbling, when compared to Angus. "These cattle are treated exactly like humans," says Gracious. Wagyu cattle don't move around much, are grain fed for 500 days and are massaged on a daily basis with special Japanese techniques – to make the meat tender and juicy.

Heifers or Steers A specific type of Angus beef from Australia, Heifers are young female cattle (below three years) while Steers are castrated males (also known as ox, and between two to three years old). This type of meat is high in marbling, juicy and flavourful. The cattle are not allowed to walk long distances, making the meat tender as well.

Steak 101

All you need to know about your moo, to ensure you get the right cut, tenderness and flavour each time. By Nicola Monteath.

LEARN THE LINGO

• **Marbling** The term refers to the little lines of fat that run throughout the steak. Marbling is made up of a healthy saturated fat that has no cholesterol, and melts when cooked on high temperatures. It is found in cuts such as sirloin, rib eye steak and T-bone. Marbling is heavily influenced by breeding, and is mostly seen in Angus and Wagyu cattle – as they are grain-fed.

• **Temperatures** This refers to the way you prefer eating your steak (the doneness of the meat), with the different temperatures being: Blue (very rare and completely red); Very rare (blood-red meat, slightly juicy and soft); Rare (Red centre, soft and juicy); Medium rare (dark pink and very juicy); Medium (pink centre but brown towards surface); Medium well (thin line of pink, but firm in texture); and Well done (tough texture and a bit dry).

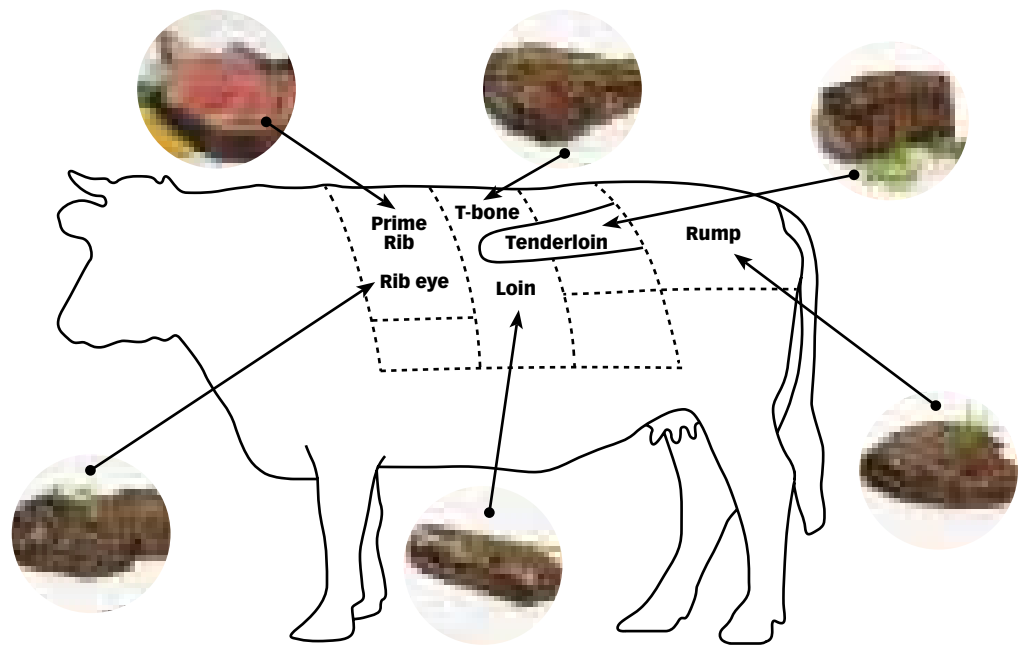
THE FEED

If you've come across the different feeds available on a menu, and assumed they were based on what the cattle literally ate, then you were right! The different types of feeds available refers to the diet of each animal and the way they are fed. However, there are a few more facts you need to know about each, in order to ensure you get the type of steak you desire.

Grass-fed The most natural diet for all cattle, grass-fed beef – also known as pasteurised beef – are known to be less tender and juicy. They are low in saturated fats and have a distinct, beefy type of flavour.

Grain-fed “The more you keep them on grain, the more marbling you gain,” says Gracious. This type of cattle is the tenderest of all, and are grain-fed in order for them to fatten up quickly.

Milk-fed Veal (calf meat) is usually milk-fed and light pink in colour with mild flavour. These cattle are usually kept penned and are not allowed to move around much.



THE CUT

If you judge a piece of steak by the way it looks, then you should know that just because it looks big, juicy and tender, it does not necessarily mean it will taste as good as you imagine. Pick the right cut and cook it to the recommended temperatures, advises Gracious. To know exactly what to choose, he explains some of the popular prime cuts:

Loin There are two types of loins available, short loins and the more popular sirloin – located close to the upper back section – also known as strip loin and strip steaks. This meat is as easy to cut as slicing bread, as long as you do it in a perfectly straight motion, providing a neat cut.

Recommended temperature: Medium rare or rare.

T-bone This cut is perfect for someone who doesn't know what to order, as it is made up of tenderloin on one side, has a bone in the centre, and sirloin on the other side of the bone. It gets its flavours from the bone.

Recommended temperature: Medium rare.

Tenderloin/Fillet This is the leanest cut available, taken near the T-bone area (the upper

short loin section) and is very tender and flavoursome. It can be eaten on its own – ordered as a fillet – or as part of the T-bone.

Recommended temperature: Rare. If you prefer it well done, make sure you baste the meat before cooking, to keep it from getting dry and tough.

Prime Rib Taken from the rib section, this piece of meat has a lot of marbling and is full of flavour, juicy and very tender.

Recommended temperature: Medium rare, well and well done.

Rump This piece is taken from the upper back (near the leg) of the cow and is flavourful but not very tender.

Recommended temperature: Rare, medium rare and medium well.

Rib eye Probably the best known cut of all, this steak (from the mid section) is juicy and tender, and has a lot of marbling that just melts in your mouth.

Recommended temperature: Medium rare and well done – in order for the marbling to melt and soften the steak. **GF**

DID YOU KNOW? USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) has a beef grade programme that is made up of three grades – Prime, Choice and Select. The highest grade Prime, is given to beef from young cattle, that are grain-fed for 300 days and are tender, juicy, full of flavour and have a fine texture. The second highest grade is Choice, featuring cattle that are grain-fed for 120 to 160 days, and are less tender, but still juicy and flavourful, with a coarse texture. Select is the lowest grade of steak, and is made up of beef from cattle that are grain-fed for 92 to 120 days. These have very little marbling and are tougher and less juicy, but leaner than Prime or Choice.

A portrait of chef Atul Kochhar, a man with glasses and a white chef's coat, smiling. The background is dark and out of focus.

Indian idol

Britain-based Indian celebrity chef Atul Kochhar is about to open his first restaurant outside UK in Dubai next month. He gives Sudeshna Ghosh an exclusive sneak preview to the restaurant, and tells us how his past has influenced his culinary present and future.

Just when we thought we couldn't have any more variety when it comes to Indian restaurants in Dubai – with everything from Karama-style cheap-yet-tasty eats and five star fine dining on offer – UK celebrity chef Atul Kochhar decided to raise the bar with the announcement of the opening of his first restaurant in the region. Rang Mahal is set to launch in the spanking new JW Marriott Marquis hotel on Sheikh Zayed Road that opens this month.

Atul, the first Indian chef to be awarded a Michelin star, moved to London in 1994 to open Tamarind restaurant, having worked his way up on the career ladder with the leading Oberoi hotel group in India. He has since worked on a variety of different restaurants including his first independent

venture, Benares, which opened in 2003, and is recognised as one of London's best restaurants.

Atul has been credited with changing the perception of Indian food in Britain, with his contemporary style, subtle use of spices, and ability to amalgamate cuisines from around the country in his food. A TV personality who regularly appears on various shows such as BBC's Saturday Kitchen and UKTV's Market Kitchen, and also hosts his own shows, Atul has won several awards including the TMG Cordon Bleu award in 2010.

With a multicultural childhood growing up in the industrial town of Jamshedpur in India to thank for his unique take on Indian cuisine, which Atul plans to bring to the UAE with Rang Mahal, Atul explains why his food has no culinary boundaries.

Q We are looking forward to the opening of your first Dubai restaurant. Can you tell us more about the concept?

A. Rather than fine dining, Rang Mahal promises to be fun dining. The atmosphere is relaxed and unpretentious, and the food uses an ingredient as the main focus – with different techniques and textures applied to it. There are no starters and main courses, and the menu is divided into different sections, based on the cooking style: Street food (or cold food) – which is served on small plates; Grills – this includes tawas and tandoors; curries; Inspirational – which features some of my signature recipes; and Desserts – which are modern and creative.

Q With your parents working in food as well, was becoming a chef an inevitability for you?

A. I grew up in a large family – we were four sisters and brothers, and lots of cousins – and in my house, food was just brought to the table at mealtimes, and everyone jumped straight in and ate. People kept dropping in at home, and it was Indian hospitality at its best – there was never a meal where we didn't have 'guests' joining us. So, for me, food is about friendship, about bringing people together – that is how I grew up eating.

My parents had a catering business, and I used to help my father as a child. I knew when I was around 16 that I wanted to be a chef – it wasn't a difficult choice for me. I went to catering school in Chennai, and then went on to work for the Oberoi group, which experience helped set the tone for my cooking.

Q What have been your main influences in developing such a unique culinary style?

A. I am originally from Punjab, but grew up in Jamshedpur – a steel plant town where people came from all over the country to live and work. So we had a lot of intermingling of cultures there, we celebrated different festivals, and my mother cooked with different flavours – that childhood exposed me to my country. This background enables me to easily mix flavours from different regions, so my food has always been seen as different. For example, I could marinate something with South Indian ingredients, but then cook it in a tandoor. Then, when I started working with the Oberoi group, that gave me an

opportunity to explore western cuisine. I don't shy away from experimenting with ingredients and flavours from other countries either... it comes naturally to me, and has become my strength.

Q You have come to be known for focusing on sustainability in your kitchens. How do you plan to maintain that in your Dubai restaurant?

A. It is a new challenge, and I am excited to learn more and finding ways around it. I would like to use whatever ingredients are available from the region – whatever the desert grows, I want to use. Then, I want to look at whatever is available in nearby regions, before looking at faraway sources – this would mean produce from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and so on. I'm working with the local team in Dubai to keep carbon miles to a minimum. If it's not sustainable, we will walk away from it.

Q Cooking is clearly such a passion for you – does the celebrity aspect of being a celebrity chef ever take away from the chef part of it?

A. I see the media as a marketing tool. It's great to have all of that, but I don't let anything come between me and my passion, and my food. I am in my kitchens every day, and even in my Dubai restaurant, I plan to be fairly involved.

Q Does that mean you cook at home too?

A. I do cook at home, but I leave it to my wife most of the time – she's a fantastic cook. I love that my kids (aged six and eight) are getting involved in the kitchen already, my daughter loves baking!

Q So, what would be the ultimate comfort food for you and your family?

A. That's easy – it's khichdi (a one-pot rice and lentil dish). It is eaten all over India, and in my opinion, it nourishes the soul. There's so much going on in that dish – and with the right accompaniments, it's delicious. It may seem simple, but it requires skill to get this dish right.

In fact, I am planning to include khichdi with a modern twist in the Rang Mahal menu, so it will be a Mushroom Khichdi, maybe with a truffle-flavoured ghee. At home, we would

typically eat it with accompaniments of different textures, such as yoghurt, poppadum and pickles.

Q Textures seem very important in most of your food... why?

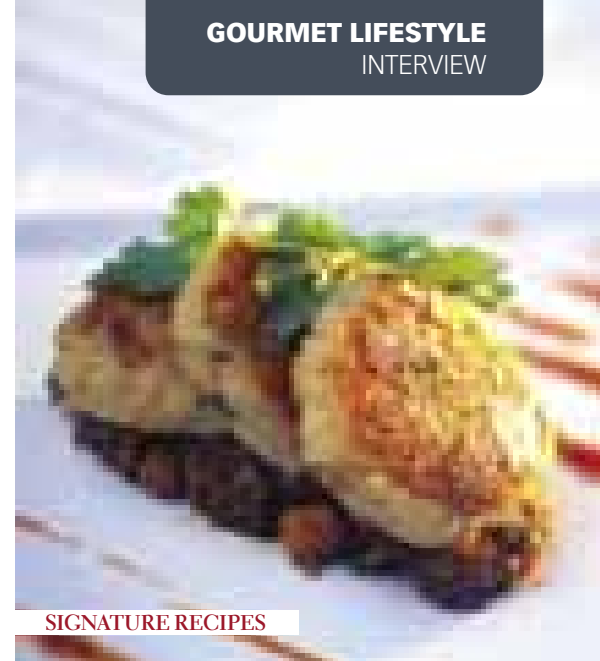
A. I come from a country where 70 per cent of the population is vegetarian, and that is the hardest kind of food to make. Vegetables have simple flavours, so you need to be clever with it – that's why textures are so important. For example, potato is so versatile – you could mash it, use it in a curry, make fritters with it, anything. I always try to include different textures with one main vegetarian ingredient in my dishes. Vegetables are also easy to work with as they take on different flavours of the herbs and spices. For example, the flavour of tarragon only works with chicken, and not with any other meat. But, any vegetable can be paired beautifully with tarragon.

Q You're also actively involved in charity work, can you tell us a bit more about who you are currently working with please?

A. I am passionate about charities that work with children. And the reason for that is quite personal – my daughter was born critically ill, and wasn't meant to survive. But, thanks to the care at Great Ormond hospital, she survived, and is healthy today. Ever since I became a parent, I have wanted to reach out to kids in need. I help raise money for the Prince's Trust, which was set up to help underprivileged children. In fact, if any of them show an interest in food, I take them under my wing, and give them exposure in my kitchen. For me, if I can look back one day, sitting down on my rocking chair, think that I've helped at least one child, it will give me immense satisfaction.

Q Hopefully for us diners, that rocking chair moment is still far away! For now, what can we see you doing next?

A. My third book, *Atul's Curries of the World* (Absolute Press), which is based on my journey to different countries, learning different cuisines, is launching early next year. Other than that, I have promised myself that I will spend more time with my family in the coming year!



SIGNATURE RECIPES

Aloo tikki with tomato chutney

SERVES 4

400g boiled potatoes, peeled and grated

1½ tsp toasted cumin seeds, crushed

½ tsp red chilli flakes

1 tbsp ginger, chopped

½ tsp green chillies, chopped

2 tbsp coriander leaves, chopped

1½ tsp salt

2 tbsp vegetable oil for frying

FOR TOMATO CHUTNEY

1 tbsp and 2 tsp vegetable oil

1 tsp ginger, chopped

3 tbsp onions, chopped

250g tomatoes, chopped

½ tsp red chilli powder

1 tsp salt

2 ½ tsp sugar

½ tsp nigella seeds

1 To make the chutney, heat 1tbsp oil in a pan and sauté the ginger and onions until translucent. Add the tomatoes, red chilli powder, salt and sugar. Cook until the tomatoes are melted to a sauce consistency. Blend the mixture well and pass through a fine strainer.

2 In a separate pan, sauté the nigella and cumin seeds in 2 tsp of vegetable oil. Add to the sauce and mix well.

3 Mix all the spices with grated potatoes. Shape the mixture into 2 inch diameter cakes with ½ inch thickness. Pat them well and refrigerate for 20 mins.

4 Heat a non-stick pan and pan fry potato cakes in oil (make sure the pan isn't smoking hot). Remove when each side has a crisp brown surface. Serve with the tomato chutney.

Lamb rogan josh

SERVES 4

1kg leg of lamb
150g yoghurt
½g saffron
30g almonds, crushed
100ml oil
For the whole garam masala
1½ tsp cumin
6 green cardamom
2 black cardamom
1 inch cinnamon stick
8 cloves
1 star anise
2 blades of mace
1 tsp black pepper
350g onions
50g ginger-garlic paste
10g red chilli powder
10g coriander powder
3g garam masala
5g tumeric powder
Salt, to taste
60g tomato paste
1 bunch coriander leaves
10g ginger

- 1** Trim and remove the bones of the leg of lamb, and cut into 1 inch cubes. Whisk the yoghurt and add almonds, saffron, salt and half the ginger garlic paste. Marinate for 2 hrs.
- 2** Pound the whole spices in a mortar and pestle. Peel and thinly slice the onions.
- 3** Wash and finely chop the coriander leaves. Then, wash and scrape the ginger and julienne.
- 4** To cook, heat the oil in a heavy bottom pan, add the pounded spices and stir till spices start to crackle.
- 5** Add the sliced onions, stir and cook till golden brown. Then add the lamb with the marinade, stir and cook till meat is browned and ¾ cooked. Add the dry spices and cook for 5 mins. Add the tomato paste and stir till lamb is cooked.
- 6** Garnish with coriander and ginger julienne, and serve with saffron rice or Indian bread.


TIP: When the lamb is added to the sauce, it will shed excess moisture and will cook in its own stock. If there isn't much liquid in the pan, you can add some water or lamb stock. Once the meat is browned, it will tend to get stuck at the bottom, so keep stirring and scraping at the bottom, this is important for the development of the flavours.



Seabass meen molee

SERVES 4

4 small fillets, about 150 g each of sea bass
2 tbsp vegetable oil
4 tbsp butter
1 ½ tsp salt
1½ tsp turmeric
30ml coconut oil
2 medium onions, finely sliced
6 whole green chillies, slit lengthways
3 garlic cloves, sliced into fine strips
30 curry leaves
400ml coconut milk
Small bunch of coriander, chopped
2 scoops of mashed potatoes
Mixed cress, for garnish

- 1** Mix 1 tsp salt and 1 tsp turmeric. Gently rub into the fish fillets.
- 2** Heat the coconut oil in a wide pan, sauté the onion, chillies and garlic. Add 20 of the curry leaves and keep cooking until the onion is translucent. Add the rest of the turmeric and salt, pour in the coconut milk and simmer very gently. Fry the rest of the curry leaves in a separate pan.
- 3** Pan fry the fish in non stick pan and finish with butter. Serve in fish plate with potato mash, coconut milk sauce and place the fish on top of the mash. Garnish with mixed cress. 





Satay

Satay



Laksa



Pepper crab



Dessert

STRAITSKITCHEN RETURNS TO PEPPERCAB

12 to 18 November

Back by popular demand all the way from Singapore, Peppercrab plays host to an authentic parade of hawker favourites from award-winning StraitsKitchen at Grand Hyatt Singapore.

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Peppercrab

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Food Safari: Denmark

Each month, we dip into the UAE's multicultural melting pot to discover a new cuisine.

Louise Kjær is the owner and founder of Studio Fitness in Jumeirah Beach Residence and also works in administration for a law firm, Gibson Dunn. With a passion for adventure and trying new things, the 26 year old moved to Dubai around 4 and a half years ago, after visiting the UAE a few times. "I have been travelling since I was 19 and Dubai is the only place where I saw myself living and pursuing my career in," she says.

Originally from Denmark, Louise loves trying out new foods and cuisines, and cooking – having started cooking for her family at the tender age of ten. "It was actually mandatory in school. They would teach us all the basics, what ingredients to use and common recipes, and I instantly started taking a liking towards it and started cooking for my family at home on a daily basis – as my mom didn't like to cook at all, and she would rather buy takeout!" says Louise.

Cooking and food, in general, has always been an integral part of her life. "I was always into sports and fitness, and knew I needed to eat right in order to be fit. I also just love eating and trying new cuisines. I also find that food has a very social element to it.

Currently living in Jumeirah Beach Residence, because of its proximity to the beach, Louise confesses that having a home near the ocean is essential for her wellbeing. "I find the sound of the ocean very relaxing. My house back in Denmark is on the beach, so when I moved out here, I knew I had to live by the sea," she says.

The ocean plays a very important role in life in Denmark, surrounded as it is by the sea on three sides. Officially known as The Kingdom of Denmark, this Northern European country has a landscape featuring fjords, peninsulas and islands. With typically cold Nordic weather (summer temperatures hover around 20°C and winters can get extremely cold, with snow and icy winds), and rocky farmlands, Denmark has traditionally been reliant on deep sea fishing – with sea trout and cod being some of the most popular kinds eaten regularly. Lokken and Blokhus, two towns where Louise spent her childhood, are full of beaches and forests.

Denmark, best known worldwide for its dairy, has a population of only 5 million. Danish people love their food – Copenhagen restaurant Noma

winning the world's best restaurant award three times in a row is probably a good indication of how much! Most people prefer buying fresh produce to cook with daily, and Noma's philosophy of using locally sourced produce reflects that ethos too.

"In Denmark, we would just walk down to the seaside, and buy fish straight from fishermen. That is definitely something I miss here," says Louise. "My favourite fish is Plaice, which is eaten steamed and fried with breadcrumbs and topped with fresh shrimp and a sprinkle of lemon."

The weather and seasonality plays a big role in what the Danish eat. "In winter it gets really cold and dull, and so we eat heavier foods, whereas the summer is just beautiful. I remember sitting by the beach and having BBQs with friends until 2am – as it just never got dark. I also remember going to nearby farms, buying fresh strawberries and eating it right there with fresh cream," she says.

Typically, summer food is lighter, with fish and vegetables eaten on a daily basis, while in winter, Danish prefer eating hearty, heavy food and a lot of rich gravies with meat and potatoes. "We eat potatoes with literally everything," she says.

In Denmark, people don't use a lot of spices in their foods, and prefer keeping it simple and healthy. "We like the ingredients to shine, and so avoid adding too many other elements that will ruin the dish," says Louise.

Some popular traditional delicacies include Smørrebrød – an open sandwich of dark rye bread with different meat or fish toppings. We eat it for lunch during summer," Louise says. "My favourite dessert is made from egg and sugar, mixed together to become stiff, and then baked and placed on top of a marzipan, and covered in dark chocolate. It is very sweet and heavy, but delicious," she says.

As Louise reminisces about big traditional meals, she tells us, "I can't wait for Christmas. I invite all my friends over and cook traditional Danish dishes of pork, caramelised potatoes, gravy, red cabbage salad, duck or turkey and a scrumptious rice pudding that has one almond in the centre; it is a Danish tradition in which whoever gets the almond in their bowl, gets to open their Christmas gifts first," she says. Here she shows us some of her favourite dishes that you could also try at home.

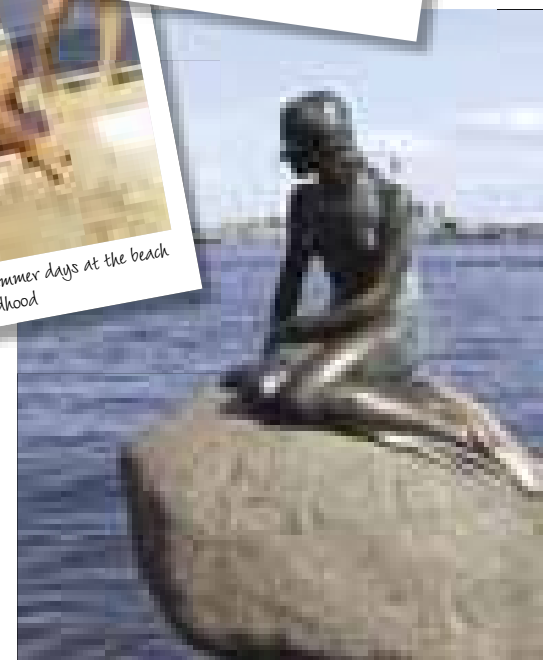


Louise ensures her diet is always healthy

Louise has been a dab hand in the kitchen since she was little



Louise spent long summer days at the beach throughout her childhood





Chicken salad Smørrebrød

SERVES 4

500g of boiled chicken with one vegetable or chicken stock cube
250g of fresh mushrooms
4 slices of fresh pineapple
4 pcs of Dutch rusk /crisp bread (available at all leading supermarkets)

FOR THE DRESSING

100g sour cream or breakfast cream
3 tbsp mayonnaise
Salt and pepper, to taste
Lemon and cucumber slice, for garnish

- 1** Cut the chicken into small cubes and mix with mushrooms. Combine the dressing ingredients and mix in with the chicken.
- 2** To plate, add a slice of fresh pineapple on the rusk, place a spoonful of chicken salad on top. Add lemon and cucumber slices on top or the side and serve.



Baked autumn vegetables

SERVES 4

3 carrots
300g beetroot
3 onions
300g parsnip
5-6 small pcs of fresh garlic cloves
2 tbsp olive oil
2 tbsp of thyme
1 tbsp of rosemary

2 tsp of sea salt

Freshly ground pepper

- 1** Slice vegetables into thick sticks.
- 2** Chop garlic into big chunks and place all the ingredients in a ziploc bag with olive oil and spices. Shake well and bake for 1 hr on 200C. Serve hot and eat as a vegetarian main or as a side dish.



Danish style fish cakes

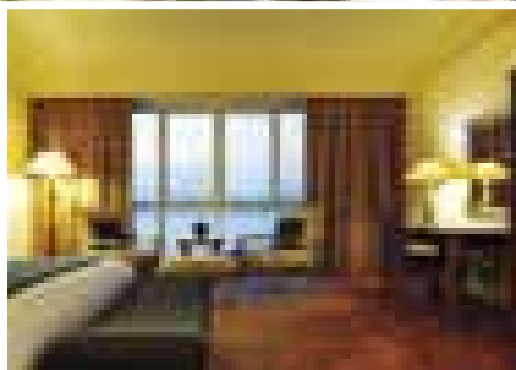
SERVES 4

1 kg of your favourite type of white fish or salmon
2-3 eggs
3 onions, chopped
Half a cup of plain flour or oats
2 tbsp sea salt
Fresh ground black pepper
Fresh lemon slices for serving

- 1** Mix all the ingredients together and beat well. Using two spoons to shape into small round cakes and place directly on a hot pan, that has been drizzled with a little olive oil.
- 2** The fish cakes can also be baked in the oven, in a glass baking tray or just placed on a baking paper, for approx. 45mins on 200C. **GF**

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breakfast, lunch,
dinner, and a
spa treatment, worth
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*Terms & conditions apply. Employees of Corporate Publishing International are not eligible to enter. Winners will be selected on random basis from correct entries. Flights are not included in this prize.

Santa's coming to Dubai!

Taste of Dubai is launching its first Christmas festival, a one-stop celebration of all things festive and Christmassy. Here's a sneak peek at what to expect.



Christmas Wonderland

HERE IS A PREVIEW OF WHAT'S IN STORE:

Cookery school – Catch live demonstrations by some of the top chefs from the region, specialising in different cuisines, to make sure your festive table is filled with delicious Christmas dishes.

Christmas workshops – Get busy with a range of activities for adults and kids to help prep in the run-up to the silly season, including handicrafts, table-setting and tree-decorations.

Giant christmas tree – Marvel at the tallest tree ever made, in Dubai, complete with a lighting ceremony to make the evening even more enchanting.

Winter wonderland activities – Sign the little ones up for fun and games.

Entertainment stage & Bandstand – Watch local bands performing classic Christmas tunes and hits, and Dubai's finest gospel choir singing some of your favourite Christmas carols.

Santa's grotto – Kids can click a picture with Santa and receive a gift.

Market – Buy unique gifts for friends and family, as you select from a range of homegrown and international brands.

School Christmas carol singing competition – Watch Dubai schools compete to win the festive song contest.

The smell of freshly baked cookies, the aroma of cinnamon, cupcake decorations, a cold winter breeze, gingerbread houses and carol-singing - there's nothing quite like Christmas! As much as we love the festive activities at shopping malls, hotels, and pop up markets, there's never been anything like this before in Dubai – a 3-day extravaganza in Dubai Media City, highlighting not only some of the best food and beverage offerings in town during the season, but also a range of festive shopping options, plus entertainment and activities. Taking place from December 6 to 8, it is set to be a one-stop Christmas destination, so put on your Santa hats and get into the festive spirit. And don't forget to come and catch up with us at the *BBC Good Food ME* stand!

Shop up a storm

Gourmet food stores and restaurants will be showcasing some of their best offerings at the festival. Look out for Milk & Honey, Coffee Planet, Great White Knives, Tasti D Lite, Choithrams, LP Dubai, LakeLand, The LimeTree Cafe, Lively, and Virgin Red Box, among others, to get all your supplies for Christmas feasts, as well as the gift table.

A unique feature at the festival will be a table top bazaar where you will find creative, handmade gift ideas – with everything from paintings, organic candles, pearls, and children's hampers, to jewellery, spa products and scarves on offer – from independent, artisanal brands.



CHEF'S CORNER

We ask four of the chefs who will be at the Cookery School, each with a different culinary specialty, to tell us what we can look forward to from them:

SIMON CONBOY FROM THE RIVINGTON GRILL

My favourite Christmas memory is definitely Christmas dinner with the family, as it's all about the simpler dishes that are served, such as really good roast potato. I also love the smell of a Christmas tree, it's so evocative of the festive season.

At my session at the Cookery School, I would like participants to take home a few unique tips to add to their Christmas table, whether it's how to make the perfect gravy to accompany a turkey, or master the art of stuffing a turkey and making roasted vegetables.



HILMER VENTER FROM NANDO'S

I will be cooking dishes that are rooted deep in the Portuguese tradition, like Cataplana and chicken algarve salad.

I will also be sharing tons of tips and tricks, that will work well during the festive season. We will show people how to make some of our recipes at home too; we will be giving out recipes for all attendees with some Nando's moments to enjoy.



LIZ STEVENSON FROM THE IVY

For me, like many, Christmas has always been about wonderfully aromatic smells and tastes. My absolute favourite aspect of Christmas cooking is the association of familiar, seasonal smells (snow, pine trees, log fires, and winter spices) having grown up in Eastern Canada. I aim to replicate that every year in my recipes, although it is quite a challenge in a desert environment!

I love teaching simple, traditional dishes that people typically don't make at home. This year, participants will come away with some very useful but basic skills that they will be able to use over and over again, and hopefully turn some of these recipes into a classic Christmas recipe that will remain amongst the family.



JAMES KANG FROM SONAMU

I will be cooking Pajeon (seafood pancake) and Hodduk (Stuffed sweet pancake) at my Cookery school session. These dishes are eaten during winter, in Korea, and are associated with the festive season.

Attendees will learn how to add different variations to dishes, and learn Korean dishes, to cook up for Christmas. I will also be sharing my tips on Korean cooking. For example, when cooking Pajeon, keep the heat at a low fire so that the dish is cooked evenly through. With a high flame, only the outside will get cooked, as the middle of Pajeon is quite thick. Also chop seafood into small pieces and spread evenly throughout. For us, Christmas is more of a holiday for Koreans than a religious event, but we have now embraced it and it is becoming one of our favourite occasions. Christmas is all about the festive holiday spirit and happiness all around. In Korea, especially during this season, we love to eat warm foods and drinks served on the streets, as it constantly snowing outside. ☺



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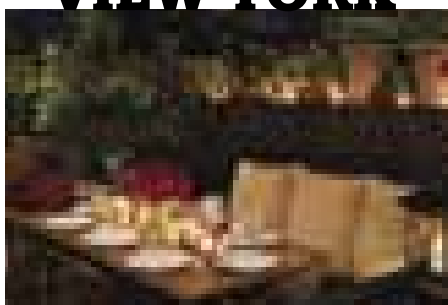
TASTE OF THE *world*

All the foodie news from around the globe.

DESIGN MEETS CUISINE

Looking for an out-of-this-world gastronomic experience? Look no further than the stunning Edge restaurant at the new (ish) Niyama Per Aquum resort in Maldives. The Edge, located 500 metres offshore and accessible only by boat, is designed to look like it's floating on water, and offers modern, innovative cuisine inspired by the Indian ocean. Start with pre-dinner sunset drinks at the Edge bar perched atop the ocean, and follow up your gourmet meal with an after-party at the underwater music club Subsix, which is just underneath the restaurant, to make it a night to remember. Visit www.peraquum.com for more info.

VIEW YORK



To make the most of a New York minute, stop by the revamped Gramercy Terrace restaurant, at the iconic Gramercy Park hotel, and discover a stylish oasis of lush greenery and designer décor in the heart of Manhattan's urban bustle. There's no better place to sample local, seasonal-inspired versions of American classics, and trendy cocktails, while taking in the views of the city skyline. Visit gramercyparkhotel.com.

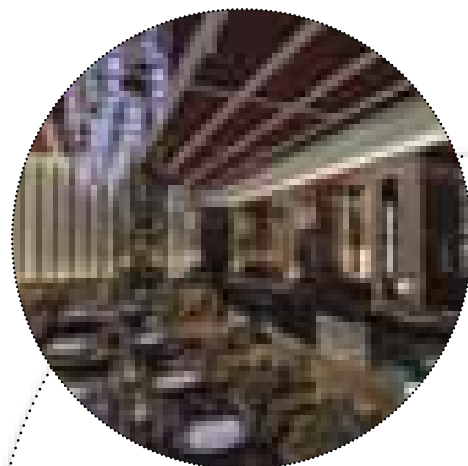
WELL FED WELLBEING

Who says spa meals need to be boring? For a spa retreat with a gourmet twist, check in at the award-winning Karkloof Spa in South Africa, where you can relax amidst the bush wilderness, indulge in natural spa treatments, and give your diet a spa makeover with raw, vegan meals that are as nutritious as they are delicious. All-inclusive room rates, with all meals and unlimited spa treatments included, start from Dh\$3,750 per night. Log on to karkloofspa.com.



Swiss sips

To discover a lesser known side to Switzerland, hop on board the Wine Train in Montreux which takes you cross vineyards, charming villages and the region's picture-perfect lakes and valleys, sampling some fine appellations – including Chasselas Grand Cru – along the way. The viticulture journey starts at Vevey and ends in Puidox, but you can check in at the luxurious Du Parc Kempinski Private Residences, located just 20 minutes away, for a taste of the luxe lifestyle befitting of such epicurean experiences. Visit du-parc.ch.



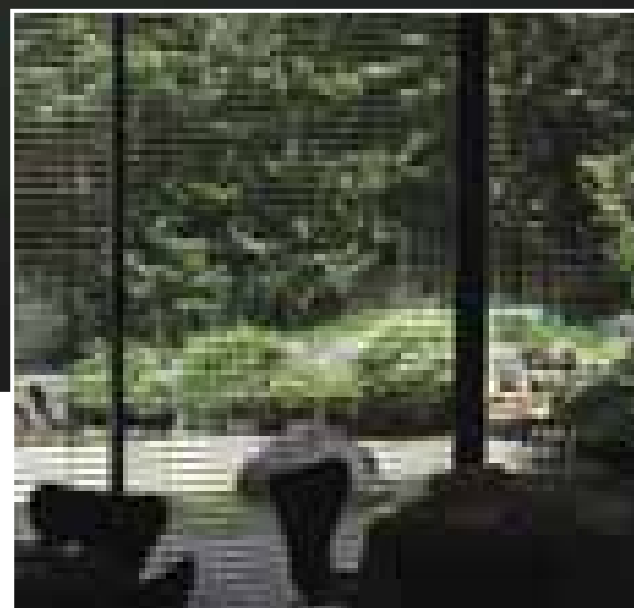
A taste of China in Egypt

If you're headed to Cairo, check out the new 8 restaurant – 8 being an auspicious number in Chinese culture – at the Four Seasons Hotel Cairo at Nile Plaza. Hong Kong chic meets authentic Cantonese flavours in the menu, and the atmospheric setting transports you to Asia, whilst in the Middle East. fourseasons.com.



3 to try: Sydney

The inside track on three essential culinary experiences Down Under. By Sudeshna Ghosh.



1 Modern classic

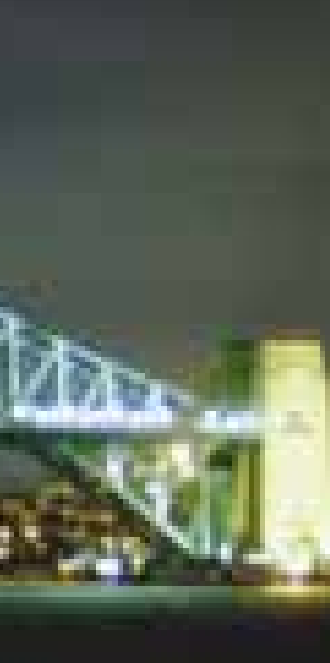
TRY TETSUYA'S: One of the city's dining stalwarts, this signature restaurant of legendary chef Tetsuya Wakuda has to be on every foodie's wishlist. Discreetly tucked away in a quiet side street off the Sydney CBD, the leafy refurbished villa the restaurant is housed in, is easy to miss. Everything about the three chef hat (Australia's equivalent of a Michelin star rating) restaurant whispers understated sophistication, from the neutral colour schemes to the service which is there just when you need it, without ever hovering. Tetsuya is a chef from Japan who effortlessly marries the minimalist simplicity and fresh seasonality of Japanese cuisine with classic French techniques, to brilliant effect. The Tetsuya experience is best had with their ten-course degustation menu, which offers a taste revelation in each course. Innovative, without resorting to gimmickry, the food is consistently delicious – expect anything from savoury sheep yoghurt ice cream, and braised ox tail with yuzu, to the Tetsuya signature dish, confit of ocean trout. The degustation menu is best enjoyed with a wine pairing – the multi-award winning restaurant even brought home an award for Hottest wine experience this year. www.tetsuyas.com.

Sydney may be better known for its beaches than its bites, and when it comes to gastronomy, it has historically always been in Melbourne's shadow – Melbourne with its trendy café culture, beautiful Victorian produce, and loyal community of top chefs. But this vibrant, picturesque city is giving its traditional rival a run for its money when it comes to culinary offerings – the success of last month's Crave Sydney Food & Wine festival bears testimony to that fact.

The Masterchef Australia phenomenon can probably take some credit for that – the popular series has been based out of Sydney for the first three seasons – but there's more to it than that. Sydney not only ranked higher than Melbourne in a recent UK survey of top foodie destinations around the world, but also walked away with a clutch of prestigious awards at the 2012 Australian Weekend Magazine Hot 50 Restaurant awards.

With plenty of new restaurants opening up, the city is developing its own foodie culture - one of relaxed cafes, top notch international names, micro breweries and food trucks.

Don't miss these Sydney must-dos when visiting the harbour city.



2 Zumbo-licious

TRY ADRIANO ZUMBO'S

MACARONS: This young chef has singlehandedly transformed the French confection into a statement dessert in Australia. A Masterchef regular – an Adriano Zumbo croquembouche (macaron tower) is what the judges trot out whenever they need to pull out the big guns from their challenge arsenal – Zumbo specialises in clever, creative, where-did-that-flavour combination-come-from kind of macarons, which are known as Zumbarons. All of his creations are fun, experimental mouthfuls of delight that you are guaranteed not to forget once you've tried it.

No visit to Sydney is complete without a trip to Manly – a posh island suburb of the city popular with tourists for its beaches and waterfront cafes – so the best way to experience a Zumbaron is to head to the Manly outpost of the Zumbo patisserie chain. A tiny bakery with a bare, studio-meets-warehouse feel and blink-and-you'll-miss-it signage, here you will find not only macarons in different flavours (salted butter popcorn or peach ice tea, anyone?) but an array of other inventive sweet treats including cakes, tarts, millefeuilles and lots more. Grab what catches your fancy (the macarons may seem a little overpriced, at around Dh\$9 a pop, but they are oh-so-worth-it), and take it to the quirky, arty café next door to sip on gourmet coffees while enjoying the Zumbo delicacies, sitting on oak barrel seats. www.adrianozumbo.com.

3 After-hours excitement

TRY PANCAKES OR A FOOD

TRUCK: Pancakes on the Rocks isn't the sort of place an average tourist would go to, but if you're with someone in the know, you'll see why Sydneysiders head here for a quick, fuss-free and tasty bite after a night out on the Rocks. The Rocks is a historical district where the earliest settlers of Australia landed, and is now a thriving nightlife district with bars, cafes and art galleries, housed in heritage buildings. Pancakes on the Rocks offers a lot more than pancakes, with everything from pizzas to crepes also on offer, in the vibe-y environment of a converted industrial warehouse.

If you're not in that area, then a meal on the move is probably the best option. The Food Truck trend – popular in many other cities – has taken a bit of time to arrive in Sydney, but now that it has, it's come with a bang. Designed to offer people more after-hours dining options – they usually go until around 2am – there are different cuisine options (with top chefs at the helm of some) serving up bite-sized portions of gourmet

food at affordable prices. There's everything from Mexican and Asian, to organic and vegetarian on offer, making these an ideal option for on-the-go tourists to get a real feel for what is currently trending with Sydneysiders, and to get a taste of Mod-Oz cuisine. Visit www.sydneyfoodtrucks.com.au for details and current locations. 



TRAVEL DIARY

WHERE TO STAY

The Sydney Harbour Marriott Hotel at Circular Quay is a centrally located luxury haven that makes an ideal base for travellers, with the Sydney CBD and its fabulous shopping, the iconic Sydney Harbour bridge and Opera house, and the transport hub that is the Circular Quay ferry and bus station within easy walking distance. The hotel underwent a multi-million dollar refurbishment earlier this year, which saw the luxurious rooms undergo a contemporary makeover – think clean, minimalist lines, neutral colour schemes with pops of bright colours, seriously cool art from local artists on the walls, and hi-tech gadgetry. Many of the rooms boast harbour bridge or Opera house views, waking up to which makes for the quintessential

Sydney experience. The hotel has a luxe day spa as well as its signature restaurant Icons brasserie, which offers modern international cuisine; other dining outlets include the historic Customs House bar, popular with locals, and Macquarie lobby lounge.

HOW TO GET THERE

Cathay Pacific offers convenient flights to Sydney at affordable prices, with a short stopover in Hong Kong that can get you there in almost as much time as a direct flight, with a distinct advantage of reduced jetlag, which breaking the journey offers. The modern aircraft offers comfortable seating and a range of dining and entertainment options. Ticket prices start from around Dh\$3,000, cathaypacific.com.

48 hours in bargain *Paris*

Four local food bloggers guide you around the restaurants and markets in the French capital, that make for an unforgettable trip.

THE AUTHOR



BRYCE CORBETT

Australian-born and Paris-based, Bryce is a journalist and author. He has written a book *A Town Like Paris* (Little Brown), and his blog *A Town Like Paris* can be found at brycecorbett.blogspot.com.

THE FOOD WRITER



MEG ZIMBECK

Meg has been eating her way around Europe for over five years. A Kansas girl, she now feels more at home in Paris and can often be found playing boules. She contributes regularly to *Saveur.com*, *BlackBook.com* and *Budget Travel*. Read her blog, *Paris and other adventures*, at megzimbeck.com.

THE CONCIERGE



ADRIAN MOORE

Canadian-born Englishman Adrian was brought to France by a job at Hotel Disneyland and is now an award-winning concierge at a top Paris hotel. He is also a food and travel writer and self-confessed hedonist, and food obsessive. Follow his blog, *Paris Food Intelligence*, at adrianmoore.blogspot.com.

THE SOMMELIER



OLIVIER MAGNY

Born and bred in Paris, Olivier is a sommelier and the founder of wine tasting company *Ô Chateau*. He enjoys eating well, drinking well and making fun of Parisians. Read his blog, *Stuff Parisians Like*, at o-chateau.com/blog.

THE AUTHOR

BRYCE CORBETT

In Paris, eating is the main event. You can come here to climb the Eiffel Tower or gawk at the Mona Lisa, but food and the 24-hour-a-day appreciation of it is what your visit should be about. But as with any city crawling with visitors, there are tourist traps aplenty and rip-offs down every rue. Here's the pick of places where Parisians eat and where you'll get the most for your money.



Traditional French cuisine is best enjoyed at a brasserie

* EAT

The French rarely stretch breakfast beyond un café and un croissant. If you want to save money, don't do the two together. Grab a croissant, €0.90, at La Fougasse (25 rue de Bretagne, 3rd; 0033 1 42 723 680) on your way across the street to Café Charlot (38 rue de Bretagne, 3rd; 0033 1 44 540 330) for a café allongé (espresso with a little extra water), €2.20. Or try the €8.50 breakfast at L'Estaminet (39 rue de Bretagne, 3rd; 0033 1 42 722 812) – a croissant, jus de pomme, café and tartine with confiture, and views of the Marché des Enfants Rouges from the café's terrace.

If you're hell-bent on visiting some of the city's big-name restaurants but don't feel like selling your house, go for lunch. Le Chateaubriand (129 avenue Parmentier, 11th; 0033 1 43 574 595) does an excellent lunch menu for €16, as does the Hotel du Nord for €13 (hoteldunord.org). But if you really want to push the boat out and sample the cuisine of one of the leading chefs in Paris, book into Les Ombres (lesombres-restaurant.com). Atop the Musée du Quai Branly, the restaurant's lunch menu, €38, includes dishes such as panfried sea bream with fennel oil and potato and

shellfish risotto. Or the Alain Ducasse brasserie, Benoit, where a three-course lunch menu will set you back just €34 – a steal given the name over the door (benoit-paris.com).

For a traditional French dinner, forget the fancy Michelin-starred joints and head to one of the city's rambunctious brasseries. Chez Janou is among the most atmospheric. A duck with rosemary will cost you only 15 and the all-you-can eat mousse au chocolat, €7, is an out-of-body experience (chezjanou.com). French brasserie Astier's set menu dinner, €31, is among the best value in all of Paris and its all-you-can-eat cheese board has to be seen to be believed (restaurant-astier.com).

* SHOP

Fresh food markets abound in Paris, and as well as providing a glimpse into the daily life of locals, they're brimming with dirt-cheap foodstuffs. Marché de la Bastille on Boulevard Richard Lenoir (Thursdays and Sundays, 8am-1pm) is among the best. Stock up on some cheese, take a freshly baked baguette and head to nearby Place des Vosges for a lunchtime picnic with one of the best backdrops in the world.

THE FOOD WRITER

MEG ZIMBECK

Paris is still a place where good products are taken seriously. In shops and restaurants across this city, you'll find stubborn romantics selling lovingly aged cheeses, labour-intensive pastries, and small batch organic wines. Their insistence on artisanal quality combined with Parisians' love of value – le bon rapport qualité-prix – make it possible to eat extremely well for not much money.

* EAT

Start off on a sweet note at Du Pain et des Idées, where you'll find the city's most appley apple turnover, €1.80. Pair it with a pain chocolat banane, €1.80, and nibble your breakfast along the banks of the nearby Canal Saint-Martin (dupainetdesidees.com). Fabrice Le Bourdat at Blé Sucré tweaks the traditional breakfast pain au chocolat with white chocolate, €1.10, and his croissant, €0.90, is on every critic's 'best of' list. A sack of madeleines for the road is de rigeur, €3 (7 rue Antoine Vollon, 12th; 0033 1 43 407 773). For people-watching, you can't beat Chez Prune. Grab a coffee, €2.50, and observe the local bobos (bourgeois bohemians) in their natural habitat (36 rue Beaurepaire, 10th; 0033 1 42 413 047).

The delicious weekday menu at épicerie and restaurant Cantine de Quentin includes an entrée and plat for €14, with updated classics like smoked duck with caramelised apple. (52 rue Bichat, 10th; 0033 1 42 024 032) La Gazzetta offers a set lunch for just €16 in a polished bistro setting. The daily changing menu features three small entrée plates and the main of your choice, such as girolles (chanterelles) with coco beans, fresh almonds and goat's cheese (satellite-

productions.fr). Cross the bridge to Berthillon, the legendary ice-cream shop on one of the River Seine's little islands, Ile Saint-Louis. Crowds gather even in winter for a cone of glace aux marron-glacés, a seasonally scrumptious candied chestnut ice cream, 2 (berthillon.fr).

Spend your evening at wine bar Le Verre Volé, which specialises in natural wines. Take advantage of the relaxed dinner rules and order a series of plates to share: brandade (purée of salt cod, olive oil and milk) with Roman-style artichokes, €7; la Caillette (sausage and mash from the Ardèche), €12, and a large plate of artisan cheese, €11.50. The setting is small and intimate, so book ahead (leverrevole.fr). At Chéribibi, in the up-and-coming quartier of Château Rouge, the crowd is hip, but the menu is retro. Three courses for €24, including classics like veal chops and chocolate mousse. (15 rue André-del-Sarte, 18th; 0033 1 42 548 896).

* SHOP

Wander through the fruit and veg at Marché d'Aligre (marchedaligre.free.fr) then head to the adjoining covered market, Sur les Quais (surlesquais.com), for great food gifts such as truffled mustard, €5.50.



A view of the Seine

THE CONCIERGE

ADRIAN MOORE

A wave of open-minded young chefs with new ideas has swept the city, renewing its culinary culture with affordable but exciting bistro cooking, and more restaurants using seasonal, organic and exotic produce.

* EAT

Kitchen is the second establishment of American expat Marc Grossman, whose first, Bob's Juice Bar, changed the way that the French saw smoothies. Organic and vegetarian, Kitchen offers breakfasts of porridge with fruit, €5.75, and smoothies, from €3.25 (bobsjuicebar.com). The Champs-Élysées Ladurée, one of Paris's oldest and most venerable pastry makers, is located on one of the most famous avenues in the world. Order a croissant filled with almonds and hazelnuts, €2.70, or scrambled eggs with bacon, €7.50 (laduree.fr). There has been a sandwich renaissance in Paris in recent years, with luxury shops, such as Cojean popping up all over the city centre. Visit for organic sarnies, such as baguette Paris Paris (poppy baguette with ham, emmental, tomato and tartare sauce), €5.20, and mini poulet coco curry (marinated chicken, coconut, lemongrass, pineapple, mango chutney and curry sauce in brioche), €3.80 (cojean.fr). Goutu is a simple sandwich shop where the bread is baked fresh daily (goutu.com). For good value dinners, try the city's

bistronomiques – these are small restaurants with short menus run by young chefs trained in Michelin-starred gastronomic restaurants. They use market-driven produce and avoid luxuries such as truffles (or charge a supplement for them), and cook using high-level techniques. Just a stone's throw from the Eurostar terminal at the Gare du Nord train station is one of the original bistronomiques, Chez Michel, owned and run by chef Thierry Breton. His €32 three-course dinner menu highlights his exceptional cooking – try duck shepherd's pie with foie gras, in the tiny bustling dining room in the shadow of the imposing Saint Vincent de Paul church (10 rue de Belzunce, 10th; 0033 1 44 530 620). Newcomer Frenchie repeats the same formula: great seasonal produce, expert culinary know-how, and a belt-tightened menu for an in-the-know local dining public. The chef cut his teeth at New York's Gramercy Tavern and Jamie Oliver's Fifteen, and the restaurant takes its name from his expat nickname. The smoked trout with wild asparagus is already legendary, and the €33 three-course dinner menu is a steal (frenchie-restaurant.com).

* SHOP

Buy a couple of bottles of wine to take home. Chapeau Melon (92 rue Rébeval, 19th; 0033 1 42 026 860) is owned by Olivier Camus, a fan of natural wine (wine produced with a minimum of chemical and technical interference). Try an Anjou from winemaker Benoit Courault, €11. Or head to the oldest wine shop in Paris, Caves Augé (116 boulevard Haussmann, 8th; 0033 1 45 221 697). They stock many fine wines – and many very expensive ones. A good buy is Vouvray from François Pinon, 2006, €8.



Camembert

THE SOMMELIER

OLIVIER MAGNY

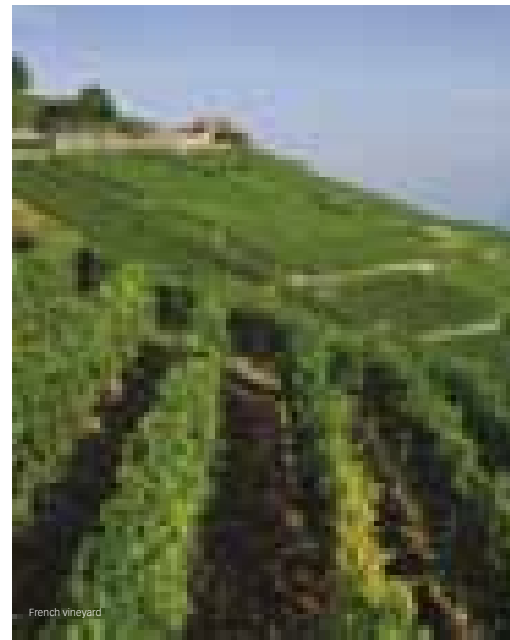
Paris is a city of discreet indulgence. Of all the global metropolises, Paris doesn't have the most exciting nightlife but with good reason – for us French, sitting down to a good meal is entertainment enough.

* EAT

A simple and delightful way to start off your day is at a bakery – buy croissants au beurre, pains au chocolat and chaussons aux pommes, less than €1.20 each, from Gérard Mulot (76 rue de Seine, 6th, 0033 1 43 268 577) then head to the nearby Jardin du Luxembourg. Want to eat in? Esméralda is an enchanting place for breakfast on a sunny day. It's located at the tip of L'Île de la Cité and offers café, €2.50, croissants, €1.90, and jus d'orange, €3. Best of all, the terrace faces the morning sun (2, rue du Cloître Notre-Dame; 0033 1 43 541 772).

Unpretentious, authentic and simple, Le Banquier is where you can expect good quality meat, killer French fries and value-for-money dishes. Lunch on pave de boeuf sauce au poivre (beef with pepper sauce), €12 (25 rue du Banquier, 13th; 0033 1 43 363 882). For a romantic vibe two minutes away from Notre Dame, the best value lunch is at Le Reminet – fantastic service, a daily changing menu of sophisticated cuisine and consistently great fish in an elegant setting. The three-course menu, €14, is a steal; dishes includes carpaccio de St Jacques (scallop carpaccio) and magret de canard (duck breast) (lereminet.com).

Dinner in Paris is probably the most important time of the day. For a traveller on a budget, maximum pleasure for your money is to be had at La Biche au Bois. Beautiful port-flavoured duck terrine, coq au vin, a fantastic cheese platter and sinful chocolate desserts – all within a €24.50, four-course menu. The wines are excellent and offered almost at cost price. I'm amazed they make a living charging these prices! (45 avenue Ledru Rollin, 12th; 0033 1 43 433 438). Le Domaine de Lintillac offers all sorts of duck specialities, straight




French Vineyard

from the restaurant's farm, near Brive. The magret de canard costs less than €10 and the most expensive wine on the list is €27.50, a Saint Émilion Grand Cru Château Gravet (lintillac-paris.com).

* SHOP

A good afternoon escapade for any food lover is the Montorgueil neighbourhood. From the restaurant-supply shops A. Simon (simon-a.com) and Mora (mora.fr), to the kitchen appliance heaven of Dehillerin (e-dehillerin.fr), there's a lot to dream about, without spending a euro.

G. Detou (58, rue Tiquetonne, 2nd, 0033 1 42 365 467) is a timeless temple to food – treat yourself to well priced treasures such as jars of honey and mustard or tins of tea. Pastry fans should head to Stohrer (stohrer.fr) for unforgettable éclairs at less than €3.50, while chocolate lovers should opt for Declinaison Chocolat (declinaison-chocolat.com); ballotins (boxes) start at just over €10. 



You are invited!

The countdown has begun to the third annual **BBC Good Food ME** awards, and we'd love for you to join us at the exclusive jazz-themed gala awards night. It will be a glamorous evening of fun, food and retro-themed revelry, celebrating the best restaurants, and foodie brands in the UAE.

When: **January 30, 2013**

Where: **Ritz Carlton DIFC**

To book your spot

Tickets cost:

- * US\$150 per seat (individual booking)
- * US\$100 per person for Food Club* members
- * US\$1,000 for every table of 10
- * US\$1,800 – VIP table of 10 (limited tables available)

*ARE YOU A FOOD CLUB MEMBER?

IF NOT, SIGN UP TO
BECOME ONE NOW, TO AVAIL
OF DISCOUNTED PRICES.

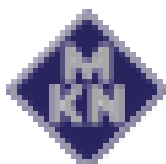
bbcgoodfoodme.com

The event includes welcome drinks and canapés, a gourmet three-course dinner, accompanied by entertainment from a world class jazz band, and of course, the chance to be the first to find out who the winners are!

For VIP table bookings, contact Marizel@cpidubai.com.

Payment can be made via credit card (online), company cheque or cash (direct payment thru CPI's NBD account)

Chef of the Year sponsor



Official hotel



Other sponsors



SHORTLISTED NOMINEES

RESTAURANTS - FINE DINING

CHEF OF THE YEAR

- * **Paul De Visser** - Ruth's Chris Steak House, *The H Hotel*
- * **Narumoul Poolkuan** - Benjarong, *Dusit Thani Dubai*
- * **Reif Bin Othman** - Zuma, *DIFC*
- * **Nick Alvis** - Table 9, *Hilton Dubai Creek*
- * **Cyril Bonnard** - Stay by Yannick Alleno, *One & Only The Palm*

- * **Francesco Dimonte** - Armani/Peck, *The Armani*
- * **Maxime Luvara** - Al Mahara, *Burj Al Arab*
- * **Hugh Sato Gardiner** - Okku, *The H Hotel*
- * **Michele Muller** - Beach House, *Park Hyatt Abu Dhabi*
- * **Juan Gonzales Fernandez** - Villa Beach Restaurant, *Jumeirah Beach Hotel*

BEST NEW RESTAURANT

DUBAI

- * **Roberto's** - *DIFC*
- * **Toro Toro** - Grosvenor House *Dubai*
- * **Titanic by Marco Pierre White** - *Melia Dubai*
- * **Rivington Grill** - *Madinat Jumeirah*
- * **The Farm** - *Al Barari*
- * **Alfie's** - *Jumeirah Emirates Towers*
- * **Signature by Sanjeev Kapoor** - *Melia Dubai*
- * **Hakkasan** - *Jumeirah Emirates Towers*
- * **Gaucho** - *DIFC*
- * **Voi** - *Jumeirah Zabeel Saray*

ABU DHABI

- * **Fairways** - *Westin Abu Dhabi Golf Resort & Spa*
- * **55th & 5th** - *St. Regis Saadiyat Island Resort*
- * **Amador** - *Park Rotana Abu Dhabi*
- * **Beach House** - *Park Hyatt Abu Dhabi*
- * **Le Deck** - *Monte Carlo Beach Club*
- * **Al Mayass** - *Sheraton Abu Dhabi*
- * **18 Degrees** - *Hyatt Capital Gate Abu Dhabi*
- * **La Mer** - *Hotel Sofitel Abu Dhabi*
- * **Ingredients** - *Eastern Mangroves Hotel & Spa Abu Dhabi*
- * **Angar** - *Yas Viceroy Abu Dhabi*

RESTAURANT OF THE YEAR

DUBAI

- * **OKKU** - *The H Hotel*
- * **STAY BY YANNICK ALLENO** - *One & Only Palm Jumeirah*
- * **Teatro** - *Towers Rotana Dubai*
- * **Table 9 by Nick and Scott** - *Hilton Dubai Creek*
- * **Zuma** - *DIFC*
- * **JWs Steakhouse** - *JW Marriott Dubai*
- * **Bice restaurant** - *Hilton Dubai Jumeirah*
- * **La Petite Maison** - *DIFC*
- * **Traiteur** - *Park Hyatt Dubai*
- * **Pier Chic** - *Al Qasr Madinat Jumeirah*

ABU DHABI

- * **Benihana** - *Beach Rotana*
- * **Hakkasan** - *Emirates Palace*
- * **The Park Bar & Grill** - *Park Hyatt Abu Dhabi*
- * **Finz** - *Beach Rotana*
- * **Bord Eau** - *Shangri-La Hotel Qaryat Al Beri*
- * **Cipriani** - *Yas Yacht Club*
- * **Bice** - *Hilton Abu Dhabi*
- * **Nautilus** - *Yas Viceroy*
- * **Marco Pierre White** - *Fairmont Bab Al Bahr*
- * **Pearls & Caviar** - *Shangri-La Hotel Abu Dhabi*

BEST EUROPEAN

- * **STAY BY YANNICK ALLENO** - *One & Only Palm Jumeirah*
- * **Reflets Par Pierre Gagniere** - *InterContinental Dubai Festival City*
- * **Le Classique** - *Emirates Golf Club*
- * **Traiteur** - *Park Hyatt Dubai*
- * **La Villa Restaurant** - *Jumeirah Beach Hotel*
- * **Nineteen** - *The Address Montgomerie Dubai*
- * **Bord eau** - *Shangri-la, Qaryat Al Beri, Abu Dhabi*
- * **At.mosphere** - *Burj Khalifa*
- * **Elia** - *Majestic Hotel Tower Dubai*
- * **Amalfi** - *Le Royal Meridien Abu Dhabi*

BEST ASIAN

- * **Zuma** - *DIFC*
- * **Thiptara** - *The Palace - The Old Town*
- * **Hukama** - *The Address Downtown*
- * **Hakkasan** - *Emirates Palace Abu Dhabi*
- * **Pai Thai** - *Madinat Jumeirah*
- * **Hoi An** - *Shangri-La Hotel Dubai*
- * **Shanghai chic** - *Ibn Battuta Gate Hotel*
- * **Benihana** - *Al Bustan Rotana*
- * **Benjarong** - *Dusit Thani*
- * **Nobu** - *Atlantis the Palm Dubai*

BEST MODERN BRITISH

- * **Rivington Grill** - *Souk al Bahar*
- * **Table 9 by Nick and Scott** - *Hilton Dubai Creek*
- * **Alfie's** - *Jumeirah Emirates Towers, Dubai*
- * **The Ivy** - *Jumeirah Emirates Towers, Dubai*
- * **Rhodes 2010** - *Le Royal Meridien Dubai*
- * **The Gramercy** - *DIFC*
- * **Harvester's Pub** - *Crowne Plaza Dubai*
- * **Embassy Club** - *Grosvenor House*
- * **Rhodes Mezzanine** - *Grosvenor House*
- * **Nelson's** - *Media Rotana*

BEST LATIN AMERICAN

- * **Asado** - *The Palace The Old Town*
- * **Toro Toro** - *Grosvenor House Hotel*
- * **La Parilla** - *Jumeirah Beach Hotel*
- * **Gaucho** - *DIFC*
- * **Pachanga** - *Hilton Dubai Jumeirah*
- * **Loca** - *Dubai Marine Beach Resort & Spa*
- * **Maya by Richard Sandoval** - *Le Royal Meridien, Dubai*
- * **Chamas** - *InterContinental Abu Dhabi*
- * **El Sombrero** - *Sheraton Abu Dhabi*
- * **Latino House** - *Al Murooj Rotana*

BEST INDIAN

- * **Indego by Vineet** - *Grosvenor House*
- * **Mahec** - *Le Meridien Dubai*
- * **Asha's** - *Wafi*
- * **Amala** - *Jumeirah Zabeel Saray*
- * **Bukhara** - *Kempinski Hotel Ajman*
- * **Ushna** - *Qaryat Al Beri, Abu Dhabi*
- * **Chor Bazaar** - *Ibn Battuta Gate Hotel*
- * **iZ** - *Grand Hyatt Dubai*
- * **Options By Sanjeev Kapoor** - *DWTC*
- * **Handi** - *Taj Palace Dubai*

BEST MIDDLE EASTERN

- * **Al Nafoorah** - *Jumeirah Zabeel Saray*
- * **Shabestan** - *Radisson Deira Creek*
- * **Ewaan** - *The Palace The Old Town*
- * **Cafe Arabesque** - *Park Hyatt Dubai*
- * **Al Hadheerah** - *Bab Al Shams*
- * **Marrakech** - *Shangri La Dubai*
- * **Mezlai** - *Emirates Palace Abu Dhabi*
- * **Tagine** - *One & Only Royal Mirage*
- * **Awtar** - *Grand Hyatt Dubai*
- * **Li Beirut** - *Jumeirah Etihad Towers*

VOTE
NOW!

BEST STEAKHOUSE

- * Ruth's Chris Steak House - The H Hotel
- * Prime Steakhouse - The Meydan Hotel
- * 55th & 5th - St Regis Saadiyat Island Resort
- * JW's Steakhouse - JW Marriott Dubai
- * MJs - Al Qasr Hotel, Madinat Jumeirah
- * West 14th - Ocean Beach Club, Palm Jumeirah
- * The Meat Co. - Souk Madinat Jumeirah
- * Fire & Ice - Raffles Dubai
- * Rare - Desert Palm Dubai
- * The Exchange Grill - Fairmont Dubai

BEST BRUNCH

- * Traiteur - Park Hyatt Dubai
- * Jazz & Bubbles Friday Brunch at Talk - Movenpick JBR, Dubai
- * Bubbalicious - Westin Mina Seyahi Beach Resort & Marina
- * Al Qasr brunch - Madinat Jumeirah Dubai
- * Spectrum on One - Fairmont Dubai
- * Mazina - The Address Dubai Marina
- * Saffron - Atlantis, The Palm
- * Legends brunch - Dubai Creek Golf & Yacht Club
- * Le Deck - Monte Carlo Beach Club
- * Yalumba - Le Meridien Dubai

BEST ITALIAN

- * Bice - Hilton Dubai Jumeirah
- * Rococo - Sofitel JBR
- * Roberto's - DIFC
- * Ronda Locatelli - Atlantis, The Palm
- * Bussola - Westin Mina Seyahi Beach Resort & Marina
- * Prego's - Media Rotana Hotel
- * Frankie's Italian Bar & Grill - Fairmont Bab Al Bahar Abu Dhabi
- * Armani/Peck - Armani Hotel Dubai
- * Certo - Radisson Blu Dubai Media City
- * Medzo - Wafi

RESTAURANTS - CASUAL DINING

BEST INTERNATIONAL

- * Caramel - DIFC
- * Jamie's Italian - Dubai Festival City
- * Tribes - Mall of the Emirates
- * Aprons and Hammers - Dubai International Marine Club
- * Carluccio's - Dubai Mall
- * Belgian Beer Café - Madinat Jumeirah
- * Toscana - Madinat Jumeirah
- * Butcher Shop and Grill - Dubai
- * Chili's - UAE
- * Api Cae - Abu Dhabi

BEST ASIAN

- * YO SUSHI - Dubai
- * PF CHANG'S - UAE
- * Noodle House - UAE
- * Lemongrass - UAE
- * Royal Orchid - Marina Walk, Dubai Marina
- * Black Canyon - Dubai
- * Royal Buddha - Holiday Inn, Al Barsha
- * Pingpong - Dubai Mall
- * Yum - Radisson Blu Hotel, Dubai Deira Creek
- * Sumo - Dubai

BEST INDIAN

- * Zafran - Dubai
- * Claypot - City Max Hotel Bur Dubai
- * Gazebo - Dubai
- * Peppermill - Lulu Hypermarket, Dubai
- * Ravi's - Satwa, Dubai
- * Bu Qtair - Jumeirah, Dubai
- * Kebab Rolls - Al Barsha, Dubai
- * Indian Palace - Dubai
- * Bombay - Marco Polo Hotel Deira
- * Kamat - Dubai

BEST MIDDLE EASTERN

- * Leila's Restaurant - Mirdiff City Centre
- * Burj Al Hamam - Dubai
- * Khan Murjan - Wafi
- * Automatic - Dubai
- * Reem al Bawadi - Dubai
- * Zataar W Zeit - Dubai
- * Wafi Gourmet - Dubai
- * Mezza House - Downtown Dubai
- * Hallab - Dubai
- * Arz Lebanon - Dubai

BEST CAFÉ

- * Jones the Grocer - Dubai
- * Paul Café - Dubai
- * More Café - Dubai
- * Make Business Hub - JBR, Dubai
- * Shakespeare and Co. - Dubai
- * Organic foods & cafe - Dubai
- * Café Havana - Dubai
- * 1762 - DIFC, Dubai
- * The One Café - Abu Dhabi
- * Lime Tree Café & Kitchen - Dubai

HOME COOKING - INGREDIENTS

FAVOURITE SUPERMARKET

- * Spinneys
- * Carrefour
- * Lulu Hypermarket
- * Waitrose
- * Park 'n Shop
- * Choithrams
- * Union Co-operative
- * Hyperpanda
- * Geant
- * Al Maya

FAVOURITE SPECIALITY FOOD STORE

- * Down To Earth Organic
- * Ripe Farmers Market
- * Organic Foods and Cafe
- * Milk and Honey
- * glutenfreesupermarket.ae
- * Baker & Spice Farmers' market
- * Wafi Gourmet
- * Besupernatural.com
- * Galleries Lafayette
- * Marks & Spencer

FAVOURITE DAIRY BRAND

- * Al Ain
- * Al Rawabi
- * Lurpak
- * Puck
- * Almarai
- * Elle & Vire
- * Nestle
- * Anchor
- * Kraft
- * Lacnor

FAVOURITE STORE CUPBOARD BRAND

- * Sacla
- * Knorr
- * John West
- * Maggi
- * Heinz

FAVOURITE OLIVE OIL BRAND

- * Figaro
- * Rafael Salgado
- * Bertolli
- * Borges
- * Rahma

FAVOURITE TEA BRAND

- * Lipton
- * Twinings
- * TWG
- * Red label
- * Alokozay

FAVOURITE COFFEE BRAND

- * Davidoff
- * Ali Café
- * Nescafe
- * Coffee Planet
- * Continental

FAVOURITE JUICE BRAND

- * Masafi
- * Lacnor
- * Florida's Natural
- * Barakat
- * Del Monte

HOME COOKING - ACCESSORIES

FAVOURITE LARGE KITCHEN APPLIANCE BRAND

- * Indesit
- * Teka
- * LG
- * Miele
- * Samsung

FAVOURITE SMALL KITCHEN APPLIANCE BRAND

- * Panasonic
- * Culin'or
- * Bosch
- * Philips
- * Kenwood

FAVOURITE TABLEWARE STORE

- * Lakeland
- * Tavola
- * @home
- * Crate & Barrel
- * Villeroy & Boch
- * Jashanmal
- * Homes r Us
- * Ikea
- * Home Centre
- * Q Home Decor

HOW IT WORKS

The BBC Good Food ME Awards celebrate and recognise the top restaurants, and food-related brands and stores, with the winners being selected through a rigorous voting process. The second phase of voting is now open, log on to bbcgoodfoodme.com/awards/2012 to vote for your favourites from the shortlist of nominees. Voting ends on November 15, and the winners will be announced in our gala awards event on January 30, 2013.

* Winners for Restaurant of the Year, Best New Restaurant and Chef of the Year will be selected by an independent judging panel. All listings are in random order.

EAT PINK

BBC Good Food ME helped mark BurJuman's Breast Cancer Awareness Campaign with a pink-themed Food club masterclass by Chef Marta Yanci.

Photographs CRIS MEJORADA

A group of food club members gathered for a master class with chef Marta Yanci, at the Community Hall in BurJuman, as part of the October Safe & Sound Breast Cancer Awareness Campaign. Chef Marta, founder of Marta's Kitchen culinary forum, a catering company and cooking school (www.martaskitchen.com), demonstrated a delicious pink-themed three course menu and got members to get cooking with her too.

Guests got to sample taster portions of the food she cooked up, and one lucky Food Club member also won a fabulous Kenwood KMix food processor in a raffle draw at the end of the night.



Chef Marta got guests involved in the cooking



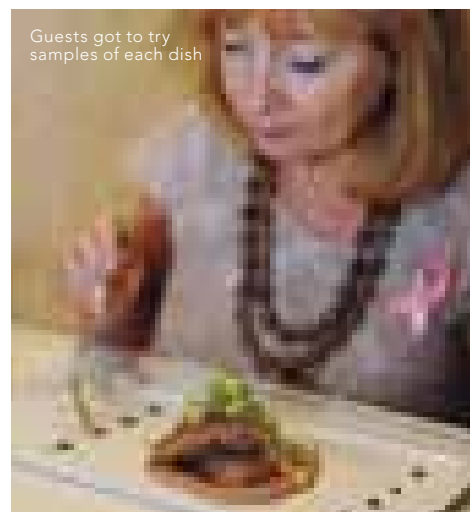
Guests were glued to the on-stage activities



Chef Marta in action



Picking up expert tips



Guests got to try samples of each dish



Getting hands-on with the pro



BBC Good Food ME's Carol Owen helps pick the raffle draw winner



One lucky winner walked away with Kenwood goodies



Beetroot gazpacho with goat's cheese and spiced beetroot

SERVES 4

300g boiled beetroot
500g ripe tomatoes
1 cucumber
1 garlic clove
200g goat's cheese
Salt and pepper
15ml red vinegar
30ml extra virgin olive oil
A pinch of sugar and cinnamon mix
A pinch of ground cloves

1 Blend 200g of beetroot, tomatoes, cucumber, garlic and salt and pepper with red vinegar and 20ml olive oil. Strain to remove any pieces of vegetable and refrigerate.
2 Cut the rest of the beetroot into small squares and sauté in a pan with olive oil and the spices.
3 To serve, pour the gazpacho in a bowl, and garnish with the spiced beetroot and goat's cheese as garnish.



Beef tenderloin with purple cabbage puree and salsa

SERVES 4

1 kg beef tenderloin, cut into thick slices
 200g purple cabbage
 1 golden apple
 1 garlic clove
 15g fresh coriander
 1 lemon
 2.5g of paprika
 15ml red vinegar
 60ml olive oil
 Salt and pepper
 200ml light cream

1 Boil the cabbage in salty water for about 10 mins. Then place the boiled cabbage in a pan with some olive oil and the sliced garlic clove and cook at a low-medium heat for an extra 10 mins, stirring constantly. Add the paprika and vinegar, give it a good stir and incorporate the cream. Set aside to cool.

2 To make the puree, use a hand blender to blend well. Set aside.

3 To make the apple and coriander salsa, finely chop the apple and coriander and combine them in a bowl with the juice of half a lemon, salt, pepper and some olive oil.

4 Heat olive oil in a pan to about 60C and cook the beef for 3-4 min on each side.

5 To plate, place some cabbage puree as the base, the beef over it and top with the apple and coriander salsa.



Strawberry and apple tartar with rhubarb compote

SERVES 4

500g strawberries
 500g pink lady apples
 250g rhubarb
 60g sugar
 2 lemons
 100g rose chocolate (available at Candelite stores)
 50g chocolate (70% cocoa)

1 Cut all the fruits into small cubes; pour some lemon juice and half of the sugar on top. Mix well and refrigerate.

2 Prepare the rhubarb compote by chopping the rhubarb into small pieces. Cook at a low heat with the rest of the sugar, until tender (about 20mins). Blend and set aside.

3 Prepare the chocolate sauce by heating up both chocolates in a saucepan with 2 tablespoons of water, stirring constantly until it is completely dissolved.

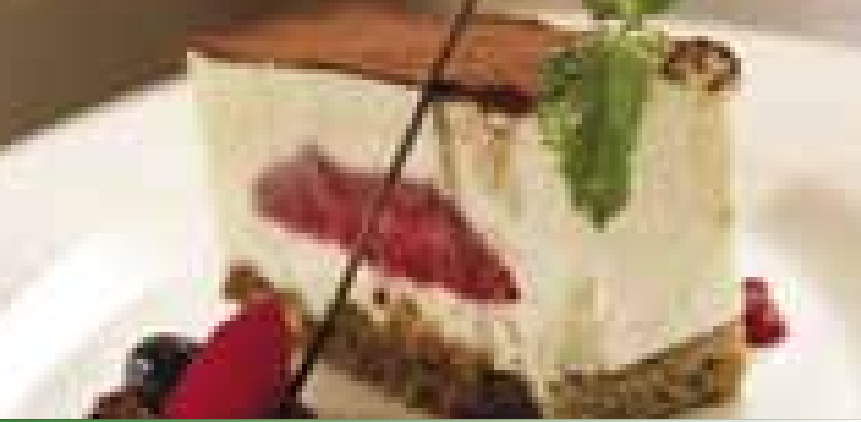
4 Place some rhubarb compote in the center of a plate, top with the tartar (by layering in a tea cup, and making sure each layer is pressed down properly, to avoid it falling apart) and decorate with rose chocolate sauce.

BURJUMAN

BurJuman is one of Dubai's most established premium malls with a range of high-end fashion brands and a variety of Food and beverage outlets.



Ristorante Italiano Di Luigi



Delizioso! Mamma never told you it was this good...

Head to Luigi's Italian Restaurant and revel in the mastery of authentic Italian cuisine.

Dine and delight in oven baked pizzas, ravishing pastas, scrumptious desserts, and more, all made from the freshest ingredients and the magic of Italian *amore*.



MEZZANINE FLOOR - FOUR POINTS BY SHERATON SHEIKH ZAYED ROAD
TELEPHONE: 04 316 9726 -- EMAIL: reservations.restaurants@fourpoints.com
WEB: fourpointssheikhzayedroad.com

Mediterranean marvels

At our latest Food Club event at Hacker kitchen, members were treated to a masterclass in Mediterranean cuisine from Girish Babu, Executive Chef at Media One Hotel, while trying out taster samples of the three-course menu. Some lucky winners walked away with prizes too! Photographs CRIS MEJORADA



Chef Girish in action

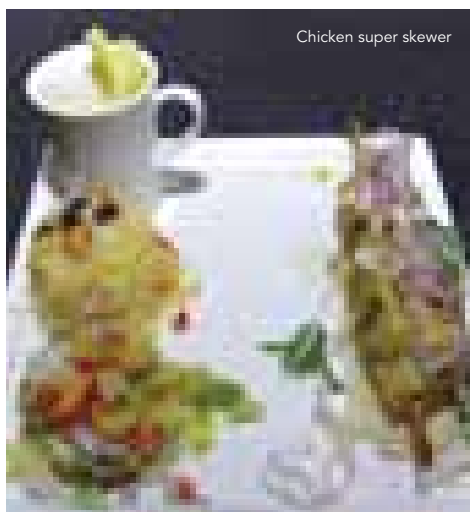


Guests watched with rapt attention

BBC Good Food ME editor
Sudeshna Ghosh welcoming the chef



Goat's cheese tart



Chicken super skewer



Tiramisu



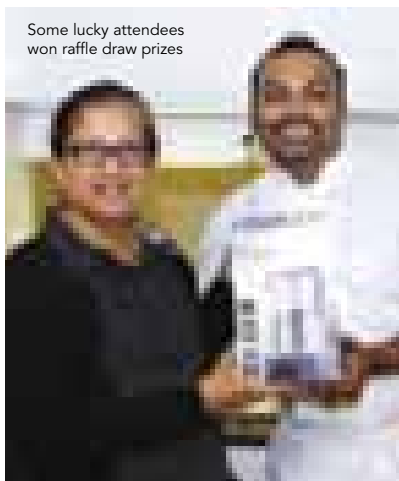
The chef got audience members to help out



Trying out the dishes



Some lucky attendees won raffle draw prizes



The chef played to a full house



STARTER

Goat's cheese tart

SERVES 4

4x9cm tartlet pastry case
 240g goat's cheese
 80g sundried tomato, chopped
 4 eggs
 120ml cooking cream
 Seasoning to taste
 120g fig marmalade
 40g Italian rocket
 180g babaghanoush
 4ml chilli oil
 4ml parsley oil
 12ml balsamic reduction
 Chervil, parmesan cheese shavings,
 rusk and shiso cress, to garnish

- 1** In a clean mixing bowl, add the egg, salt and pepper and whisk in the cream.
- 2** Place pastry case on baking sheet. Add crumbled goat's cheese and sundried tomatoes. Spoon over the egg mixture and bake at 160C for 12mins or until golden in colour.
- 3** Remove from the oven and set aside to cool. Top with fig marmalade and garnish with Italian rocket in balsamic and parmesan cheese.
- 4** To serve, spoon babaghanoush into a shot glass, top with a rusk and cress. Place on a plate, add the tart. Drizzle flavoured oils and balsamic reduction on the side.



MAIN

Chicken super skewer

SERVES 4

1200g boneless chicken
400g marinade

4 small red pepper
4 small green pepper
4 small tomato
4 small yellow pepper

FOR THE MARINADE

240g labneh
80g onion paste
20g garlic paste
Few strands saffron
8g spice powder
40ml corn oil
8g cardamom powder
40g mustard paste
Salt and pepper, to taste

FOR THE BIWAS SALAD

120g onions, sliced
Handful of parsley
Few sprigs of mint
8g sumac powder

12ml lemon juice
20ml olive oil

SIDE DISHES

320g fattoush

2 cups saffron rice, cooked
French fries (optional)
240ml mint labneh
12ml garlic mayonnaise
8 pcs small Arabic bread

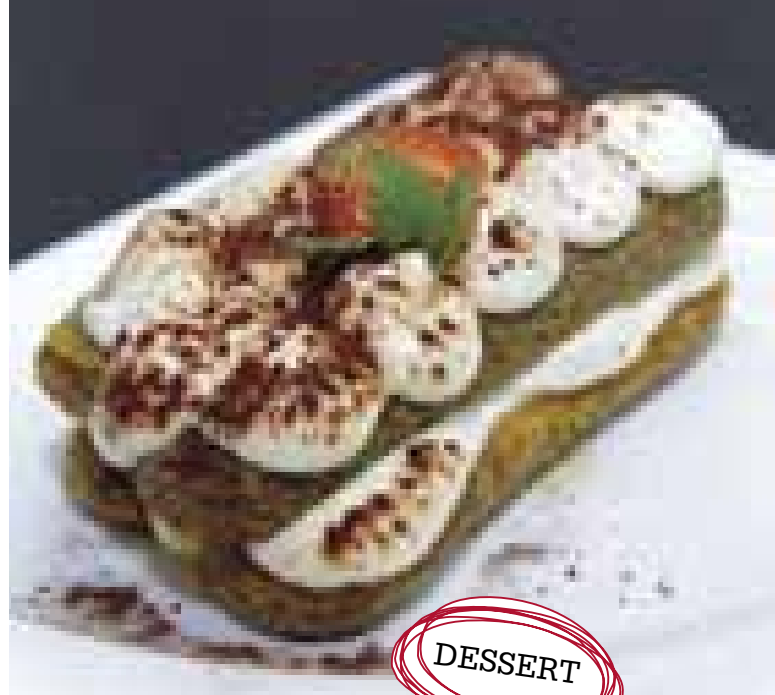
1 To make the marinade, mix onion paste, garlic paste, labneh, saffron, spice powder, corn oil, cardamom powder, mustard paste, salt and pepper. Make a smooth paste and add to the boneless chicken pieces. Refrigerate for 4 hrs.

2 Cut all the vegetables into equal sizes.

3 On a clean skewer add the vegetables and marinated chicken alternately. Grill on medium heat until the chicken is cooked and tender.

5 To make the biwas salad, combine sliced onions, parsley and mint leaves, add sumac powder and drizzle with lemon juice and olive oil.

6 To serve, place chicken skewer on top of Arabic bread on a plate, with Biwas salad, and French fries, fattoush, and saffron rice on the side. Drizzle mint labneh and garlic mayonnaise. Garnish with lemon wedges and mint.



DESSERT

Tiramisu

SERVES 4

4 egg yolks
60g sugar
480g mascarpone cheese
320ml whipping cream
Few drops of vanilla essence
4 espresso coffee
40g sugar
120g Savordini or sponge finger biscuit
12g cocoa powder
8 strawberries

1 Beat the egg yolk and sugar until fluffy, set aside.

2 Mix the mascarpone until soft and then add the whipped cream and mix well. Fold in the yolk mixture and add vanilla gradually.

3 Add sugar into espresso to make a syrup, pour over the biscuit and allow it to soak. Layer the cheese mixture and the biscuit on a plate or in a large cappuccino cup.

4 Dust with cocoa powder, garnish with strawberry and coffee syrup. Serve.

Häcker
kitchen.germanMade.

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and breakfast on
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This trendy Dubai Media City hotel is a prime destination for a party weekend with friends. The hotel boasts views of the sea, with contemporary décor in each room to reflect a fun vibe, as well as a large outdoor pool on the terrace, where you can relax, sip drinks from the pool bar and listen to tunes played by the in-house DJ. The lucky winners get two rooms for two nights each, plus a table for four at the lively Early bird Friday brunch at The MED, where they can feast on a range of Mediterranean salads and fresh foods cooked at live cooking stations, as well as breakfast at The MED on Saturday morning.

Log on bbcgoodfoodme.com to enter this competition and simply answer this question:

What is the name of the Friday brunch at Media One Hotel?

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to go straight to
our website. 



*Terms & conditions apply. Employees of Corporate Publishing International are not eligible to enter. Winners will be selected on random basis from correct entries. Flights are not included in this prize.



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In next month's issue

X'mas special



*Christmas feast

Traditional Christmas Day menus, homemade cakes and gingerbread houses, and lots more!



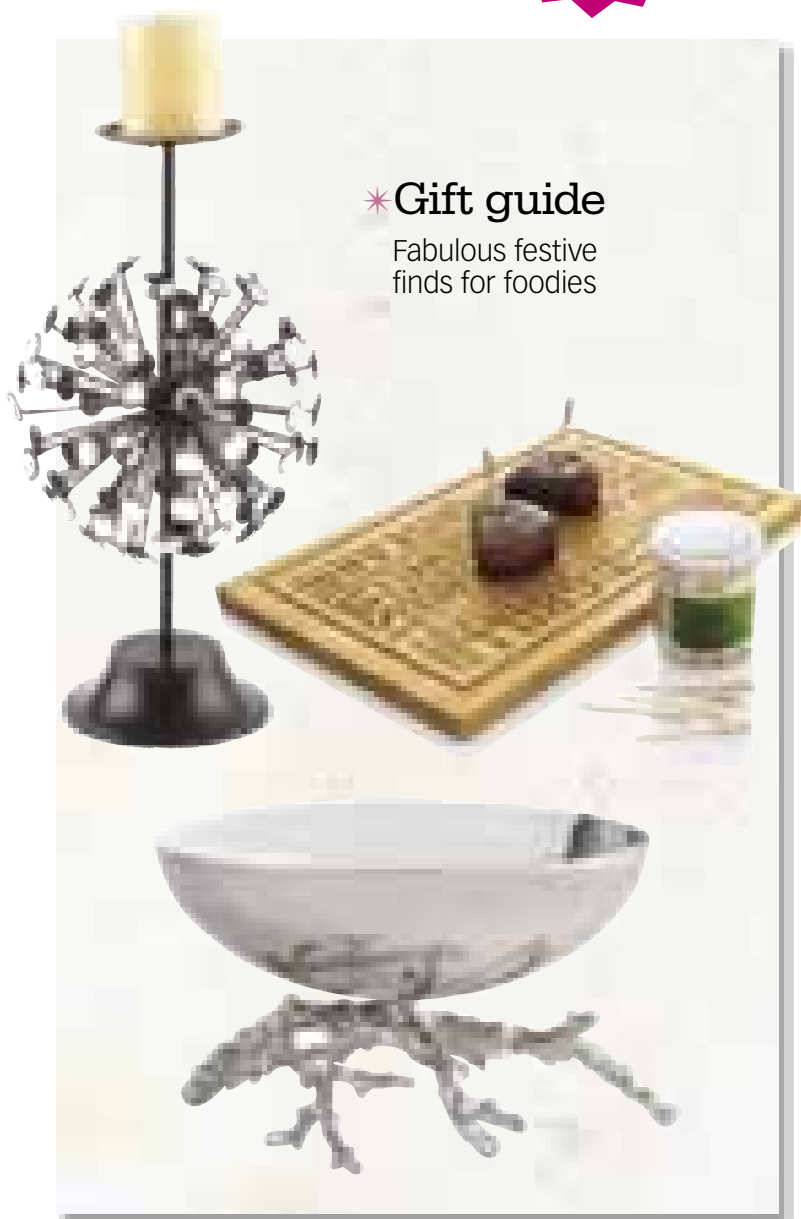
*Meet the chef

An interview with French 3-Michelin star chef Yannick Alleno



*Entertain in style

Table setting tips, budget-saving ideas and other essentials for throwing a stylish party



*Gift guide

Fabulous festive finds for foodies

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- **Access to exciting competitions**
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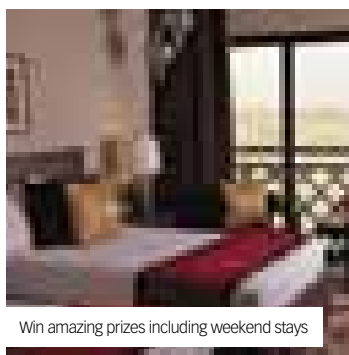
Learn to master delicious dishes



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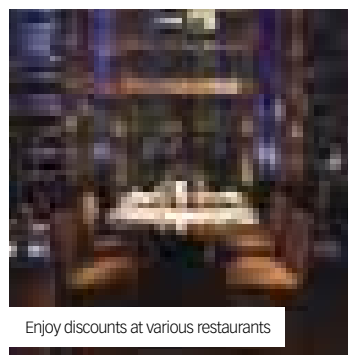
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What they said

Feedback from our Food Club members:

“Huge compliments to the team for a stunning Masterclass event. They are presented so professionally and are a fantastic showcase for the chefs and their restaurants.” – Paul Conroy

“Thank you for the invitation to the Masterclass. We really enjoyed ourselves and look forward to replicating the menu when we next have friends over.” – Liz Sandford

“Just wanted to say thanks very much for another wonderful, educational and tasty evening. My husband and I are very grateful to be able to attend these events.” – Annette Duke

Present your Food Club membership card at these outlets to receive a **fabulous discount!**



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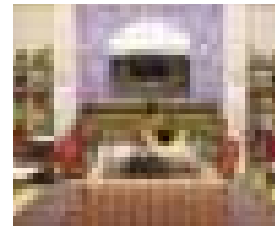
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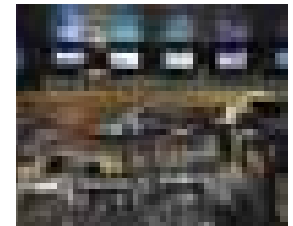
Discount: 20% off F&B
www.makebusinesshub.com



LEILA RESTAURANT

This authentic Lebanese restaurant in Mirdiff City Centre offers home-style food in a casual setting.

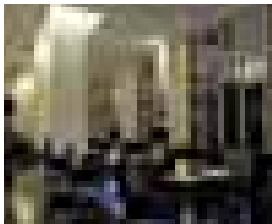
Discount: 20% off F&B
www.leilarestaurant.com



MELIA DUBAI

This Bur Dubai hotel is known for its popular restaurants Titanic by Marco Pierre White, and Signature by Sanjeev Kapoor.

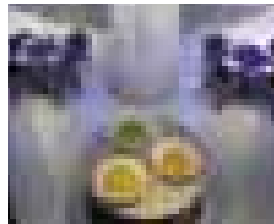
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RITZ CARLTON DIFC

The glamorous hotel in the heart of the city has three fine-dining outlets: Center Cut, Can Can Brasseur and Blue Rain.

Discount: 20% off food at all outlets.
www.ritzcarlton.com



MEDIA ONE HOTEL

This modern hotel in Dubai Media City offers contemporary dining outlets including Café M, Z:One and The Deck on 8.

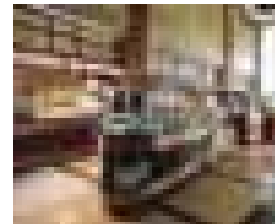
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MOVENPICK BUR DUBAI

Located in central Dubai, the hotel's outlets include authentic North Indian restaurant Chutneys, and Fountain.

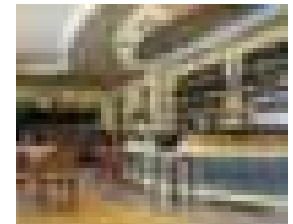
Discount: 20% off food only
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AL RAHA BEACH HOTEL

Set on the corniche, the hotel's outlets are Sevilla, Azur, Café Mozart, Black Pearl Bazar, Enigma, Wanasah and Al Manzil.

Discount: 25% off F&B at all outlets
www.danathotels.com



LE ROYAL MERIDIEN ABU DHABI

This luxurious five-star hotel has gourmet restaurants including Amalfii, Al Fanar, and L'Opera.

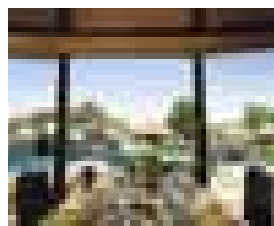
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DHAFA BEACH HOTEL

Dhafra Beach hotel's signature all-day dining restaurant is Mayadeen, while their other outlet is Al Hana.

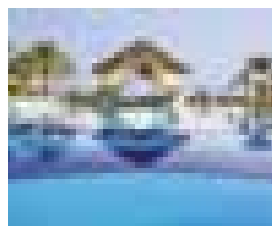
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DANAT AL AIN RESORT

The resort's restaurants include Arabesque, Luce, Tanjore, The Wok, and Shooters.

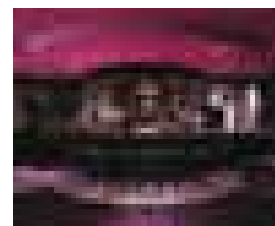
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DANAT JEBEL DHANNA RESORT

The beach resort's outlets include Tides, Zaitoun, C View café and Latitude bar.

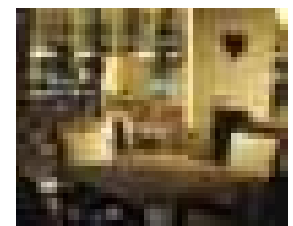
Discount: 25% off F&B at all outlets
www.danathotels.com/JebelDhanna



SANDS HOTEL

This Abu Dhabi hotel's restaurants include LaPiazza, Harvesters Pub, Chequers, Tipar Bar and Cappuccino Royal Café.

Discount: 25% off F&B at all outlets
www.danathotels.com



TILAL LIWA HOTEL

Located amidst secluded dunes off the Rub Al Khali desert, the hotel's restaurants are Al Badiya, Layali Bar, and Al Liwan.

Discount: 25% off F&B outlets
www.danathotels.com

*Terms & conditions apply.

Competitions

Fabulous prizes, from dining vouchers to event passes, up for grabs.



WIN! BRUNCH FOR FOUR AT THE TALK RESTAURANT, WORTH DHS1,300.

Two winners can get into the brunch frenzy with a guest each, at the Jazz & Bubbles Friday brunch, which includes entertainment from a live saxophonist. There's everything from sushi, to pizza and pasta on offer, and if you're looking for a real treat, you can try out the selection of premium cheese and wines.

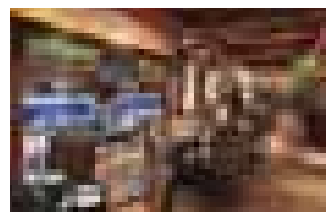
WIN! DINING VOUCHERS FROM CARTER'S, PYRAMIDS WAFI, WORTH DHS2,000.

4 lucky winners will get a chance to indulge in a delicious menu of British classics, along with a friend each, at Carter's, the gastro pub and sports bar. Offering a relaxing ambience, Carter's is ideal for a chilled evening out where you can let your hair down and simply relish good food.



WIN! 20 TICKETS TO THE DUBAI CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL, WORTH DHS1,000.

Get a chance to experience the 3-day Dubai Christmas Festival extravaganza, taking place at Dubai Media City from December 6 - 8. Each winner will gain entry to the event where they can click a picture with Santa at the Grotto, learn a few tips and tricks at the cooking school and shop for gifts at the Christmas market, while enjoying carols sung by the live choir and band.

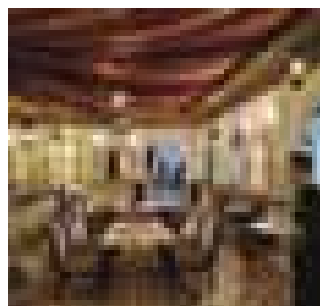
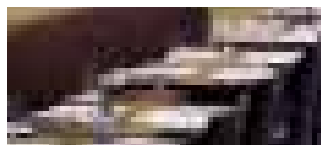


WIN! LUNCH OR DINNER FOR TWO AT PEPPERCRAAB, GRAND HYATT DUBAI, WORTH DHS500.

Embark on a culinary journey through Singapore, as you try mouthwatering fish and seafood, as well as the famous chilli and pepper crabs, while watching chefs cook up a storm in the kitchen. This family-style restaurant offers authentic Singaporean cuisine, which is an amalgamation of influences including Chinese and Indian.

WIN! DINNER VOUCHERS FOR THE FOUNTAIN RESTAURANT, MOVENPICK BUR DUBAI, WORTH OVER DHS500.

One lucky winner along with a guest will get a chance to try out a range of nutritious dishes, as part of the Food for Life night held on Wednesdays. Tuck into dishes that aren't only a feast for the eyes but also delicious and easy on the waistline. That's not all! Another winner and guest can also win a chance to feast on succulent meats, tender cuts and seafood, as part of the Grill Night that takes place every Thursday and Friday.



WIN! MEAL FOR TWO AT MARRAKECH, SHANGRI-LA DUBAI, WORTH OVER DHS350.

Transport yourself to exotic Morocco, as you take in the aromas and listen to tunes from Marrakech. One winner will get to enjoy a buffet dinner with fresh authentic dishes cooked on the spot, at live cooking stations.

WIN! CHEESE AND WINE PAIRING FOR TWO AT MAZINA, THE ADDRESS DUBAI MARINA, WORTH OVER DHS250.

One lucky cheese lover can win a voucher to sample some of the finest cheese and charcuterie, paired with two glasses of refreshing wine, along with a friend. The widespread buffet is offered on Fridays.



To stand a chance to win these prizes, visit our competitions page on www.bbcgoodfoodme.com, or simply scan this QR code with your mobile to go directly to the website, and answer the simple questions.



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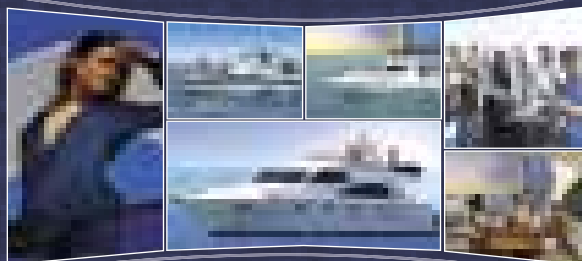
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THEMES CAN BE CUSTOMISED TO ORDER





37-year old, **ANJA SCHERWIN** is the founder of Anja's Food 4 Thought, but she's much more than a cook and blogger. Living in the Springs with her husband and two children (aged four and seven), German national Anja works as a freelance photo editor, photographer and food stylist too. And what does she do when she isn't cooking? "I love running and participating in races from 5K to 42K," she says, as though it's as simple as making a salad!

A foodie personality I would love to dine with...

...is British celebrity chef and television personality Keith Floyd. He would have made a great dinner guest as he knew his food and would never mess with flavour. I would have probably asked him to cook for me in fact!

Culinary icons

Jamie Oliver – he is doing on a big scale what I am trying within my reach, showing people that it is easy to make nutritious and delicious meals and trying to change their eating habits. Bad eating habits are the main cause of obesity and other health related problems. Jamie Oliver makes it his mission to educate, and I admire that.

Food inspiration

I have a weakness for dishes with as few ingredients as possible. I recently found a chocolate cauliflower cake recipe, and I think it is the combination of such ingredients in a recipe, that motivate me to give my dishes a creative, fun twist.

Meet the blogger

Helping you connect to the UAE'S foodie community, one blog post at a time.

*About the blog

Anja's Food 4 Thought began three years ago as my journal of healthy eating. My recipes are free of refined flours, sugars and processed ingredients, and a lot of my recent recipes are even gluten-and grain-free. I honestly feel that my overall wellbeing has improved without gluten and grains, which is why I like sharing these recipes with my readers, to enable them to eat healthier. I get inspired by various cuisines and ingredients, and try to add a health element to all food. On the blog, you'll find easy to cook, delicious and nutritious dishes, made from scratch – as I want readers to know it isn't as hard as it may seem.

Top cooking tips

- * Use jaggery (an Indian coconut sugar) instead of brown or white sugar in baking. It has a low GI, is full of vitamins and minerals, and is a much better option when compared to processed white or brown sugar.
- * Baked goods taste sweeter when they are eaten hot. Pop muffins, sweet breads, bars and squares, in the microwave for 20 seconds before serving. You could also use a little less sugar or sweetener in a recipe, since its taste will be sweeter than it actually is, when hot.
- * Make your own fresh wholegrain or nut flours by grinding grains or nuts as needed in a coffee or spice grinder. It's much cheaper than store-bought flours, and more nutritious as well.

“If I had my way, I'd travel all the way to Cascais in Portugal, to eat at Santini's (a world renowned gelato store).”

Fondest food memory

It would be of a flight to China – where we lived for two years in the early 80s – from Germany, on which a man gave my sister and me a piece of white Toblerone. After two years of abstaining from chocolate, we realised nothing ever tasted so good!

Secret ingredient

It's no secret at all, but nuts can be used in anything. Filled with healthy fats, they help keep the blood sugar low and the waistline under control. I sprinkle roasted and chopped nuts on my breakfast yoghurt, and on salads for texture. I also use nut flours in cakes and pie crusts as they are nutritious and gluten-free.



My Ultimate meal

Whole king prawns dipped in homemade mayonnaise. Oh, and I love ice cream!

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